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LIFE, LETTERS, AND DIARIES

OF

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE

FIRST EARL OF IDDESLEIGH

BY

ANDREW LANG

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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(*From the Picture by George Richmond, R.A.*)

PORTRAIT OF CECILIA-FRANCES, LADY NORTHCOTE, COUNTESS OF IDDESLEIGH, . . . *Page* 64

(*From the Picture by George Richmond, R.A.*)

INTRODUCTION.

In an age when biographies are so commonly written, when even the least distinguished lives are commemorated, there need be no excuse for a Life of Sir Stafford Northcote. His career shows how much a man may do, who has neither commanding genius, nor is born to great place, nor is animated by the restless eagerness of ambition. A country gentleman of no large fortune, of a family not illustrious though ancient, a politician without rancour or guile, a gentleman innocent of self-seeking, he reached almost the highest place in the service of his country; he discharged, as leader of the House of Commons, quite the most laborious functions in the world of politics; he smoothed, in his degree, the most complete and rapid of political transitions; he lived without a stain, and he died without an enemy. No common character could have achieved all this, and yet no critic would call his character strange, unusual, beyond the course of nature. In truth he carried the common excellences and virtues to

an uncommon pitch of perfection, and displayed them in a harmony as singular as amiable and admirable. His success was due to the simple habit of keeping himself at his best, not for reward, but for the sake of his country, and his duty. His biographer, in all the mass of letters and diaries, has found no single touch nor trace of eagerness for his own advancement, of envy, of jealousy, of displeasure at the triumph of another, or of glory in his own. The Greek philosopher spoke of characters "naturally good," of men excellent, as it were by instinct or the grace of God, apart from reasoned reflection on conduct, apart from struggle after virtue—

> "Glad hearts without reproach or blot,
> Who do God's will and know it not,"

or, at least, know it not by any difficulty felt in the task. Such persons, says Plato, may be born into the worst as well as the best commonwealths. Their examples, showing the beauty of goodness all the more, by virtue of the unconscious ease with which they practise it, are fountains of light in the existence of men and of the State.

The life of Sir Stafford Northcote approached the type which the Greek has so affectionately described. He was born happy and good, skilled in the art of conduct, as others are born to excel in painting, poetry, or sculpture. But the excellence to which he attained, and which made his force, came more easily and readily than the other arts come to any man. There is in his career no period of storm and stress such as occurs in the ex-

perience of most. We never find him doubting nor dissatisfied, nor at all at a loss as to that which he should do. "Mankind," says Alexandre Dumas, "have for six thousand years been hooting at this divine drama of the world; for myself, I shall never cease to applaud it." Sir Stafford would probably never have expressed his thought about the world in this fashion, but the attitude of Dumas was his. He did not quarrel with life, nor with his part in the play: he was as ignorant of discontent as Nelson was of fear. His part he played to the very best of his ability, but for its own sake, not for the sake of any prizes. In later life the part was not always that which he might have chosen, that for which he might have hoped; but he never for a moment allowed regret or ambition to divert his loyalty. No one could injure him by thwarting him: though he was not a reader of the Imperial Stoic, he unconsciously lived in the belief that he was not to be harmed by any man, nor by any influence from without. "This is the happy warrior" in the cruel war of politics, and this he was. His tranquillity was his strength, and this tranquillity could not exist in the same heart with love of self, with a selfish and exclusive ambition.

The familiar praise of "sweet reasonableness" or ἐπιείκεια may be justly applied to him. He was tolerant, fair, just, and, to use an English expression, in all his public and private behaviour he was "sportsmanlike." It is a trivial word, but in this degree denotes no trivial character. His eminence was moral rather than intel-

lectual; his strength was one of balance, not of brilliance of parts.

The intellect of Sir Stafford Northcote may perhaps best be described as ready at every need. It was admirably disciplined rather than vivid and original. His powers were always entirely at his command, so that whatever he could do, he could do with ease. His education and his taste gave him a wide command of literature, at once an ornament and a consolation. His education had made him acquainted with the best that has been written and said in the ancient and the modern European languages. His love of poetry was at once ardent and refined. Seldom has the same quality of spirit accompanied so much quantity of intellectual force ready to be employed in all the details of business. Perhaps only in Mr Gladstone, at least during our age, have the qualities of the man of letters and of the financier been so combined. As a rule they are divorced. What was peculiar to Sir Stafford, at once his force and his limitation, was the practical character of his mind. He took theology as he found it, without questionings of that which is eternally inviting, and eternally refusing to gratify, our curiosity. He took politics as he found them, without deep or novel reasoning; without the advantages and without the drawbacks of too extended vision. His mind was entirely alien to metaphysics of all sorts; no man, it seems to his biographer, was ever less speculative. "A child of the idea" as the phrase runs, he was not. He had great capacity for business, great industry, though, like Scott, he regretted

his own indolence; he had great readiness and clearness in financial statement. When pondering his Budgets he was as much at ease, enjoyed himself as much, as while turning off innumerable Latin verses when a boy at school (like Mr Reginald Cuff, he could make "forty in an hour"), or, in his own phrase, as when playing chess. Thus, as has been said, his intellect was ever his servant: it never carried him into rare heights or strange distances, like that unbroken steed of the soul in Plato.

Such a man, it need hardly be said, cannot be reckoned among the greatest of mankind. He was too much on the ordinary level of humanity for that, and his excellence was to do common things in an uncommon way. He neither was eloquent nor aspired to eloquence. He was logical, clear, candid, and impartial; as far as these virtues of speech go, he was also persuasive. He was humorous, and appreciated humour, but he had neither the melancholy nor the fantasy of the humorist. He was especially equable: there were no shining peaks nor unfathomed depths in his mind. His courage, physical and moral, was great and undoubted, except by those who mistake justice, forbearance, and kindliness for lack of courage. He was not, however, combative, in an age of combat. Yet on various occasions, on one in particular, a turning-point in recent politics, his voice was for "the more spirited course" as the better, when the voices of more ostentatiously combative men were for the less spirited course, and overbore his opinions. The mild, the half-hearted course was taken: it were better to have tried and to

have been defeated. This was his counsel; it was overruled. But these things, and many others which illustrate his character, can at present only be stated, without proofs which the reserve of contemporary biography must decline to produce. He accepted the conditions of party warfare, and of other matters, as he found them in his day, and was loyal in all things, where his honour did not decline to follow, to his party leaders. This life of ours is a compromise, above all within the lines of party, and to compromises he was not recalcitrant.

The successes of his life, apart from what he certainly cared for least, his own party advancement, were of two kinds. In business he was unsurpassed. From his first work on the Navigation Laws to his conduct in negotiating the Washington Treaty, or to his last criticism of a Budget, his services were always inestimable. They were not showy, perhaps, but they were of true value to the State. His frankness, which did not harm his astuteness and clearness of vision—his admirable temper, and his good-humour, made him a master in all negotiations, whether foreign or domestic. His geniality and fairness, again, and his lifelong friendship with his early leader, the opponent of his later life, enabled him, as we have said, to ease the terrible strain of politics. The same qualities accompanied him, of course, in his discharge of local and personal duties as a magistrate, a landlord, a kinsman, and a friend.

His affections were immutable rather than picturesque: he was the most constant of friends, and the most trustworthy of allies. In his private friendship, it was his

singular fortune to be attached with an almost equal affection to two men, in all respects each other's opposites, Mr Gladstone and Mr Disraeli. The pain which political differences cause in private friendship was felt, and indeed once expressed by him, in language of emotion beyond what English reserve is often wont to employ. This is not a matter on which much should be said; but it may be stated that in the domestic affections and in some private friendships of Sir Stafford Northcote, the poetry of his nature declared itself, and was to be known by those who had the right to know it. His loyalty to his sovereign was "the constant service of the antique world."

Such, as one gathers from the remains of his life, was Sir Stafford Northcote. Perhaps his character would yield few secrets or none to a more minute research: it was all open to the sun; there were, apparently, no hidden folds and intricate passages in his nature. It was plain, manly, simple—untouched by any affectation, unembittered by any unfulfilled aspirations or desires. We may certainly call him happy.

The records of such a character, even when concerned with great affairs, cannot be among the most romantic. Neither can they possibly charm us, like the story of great genius, with its glance into the ideal and the unattainable, with its gloom and glitter, with the magic of its power over men and over the fortunes of nations. Sir Stafford was no heaven-born leader: he overcame no scarcely surmountable difficulties; he was the loyal servant of the State, he guided it towards no new destinies. It may

even be said that his example of rectitude and true human charity is less enticing, because to him his conduct was so easy. When once he had passed out of the thoughtlessness of early boyhood, it seems as if, unlike the rest of us, he had to fight no temptations. In one of his letters he says that he is half ashamed of being so easily happy. But an example of happiness like his has in no time, and least of all in ours, been so common or so conspicuous that we need regret his genius for felicity. It was really nothing short of genius, and to this he owed his freedom from temptations. He had no vague desires, no vain regrets: he lived in his work and in his home, undisturbed, as it were, by the passions. That "passionless bride, divine tranquillity," which the Roman poet so passionately and so vainly wooed, gave herself unbidden to him. We watch and envy him, whose nature made him a source of peace in warring times; we envy, but we cannot imitate. The gifts of character, of courtesy, of purity and peace which were his by nature, as the gifts of force and victory are in the lot of others, we can admire, and we can strive in some degree to approach; but, like any other natural endowments, they are not to be wholly won by discipline and labour.

The biographer has attempted here to give the sum of his impressions, and to offer the sketch of a character as an introduction to the record of a life. On the whole subject of biography it would not be difficult and it might be pleasant to write at length. In this, as in everything, the fashion of the world changes. To Plutarch but a few

pages sufficed, and in them he drew his men—imperishable portraits. The life of Agricola, in the hands of Tacitus, fill but twenty folio pages, and yet Tacitus might easily have played the Boswell to his father-in-law. The ground that Izaak Walton occupied in his Lives was scarcely more spacious, and about our greatest name only a sheet or two of doubtful anecdotes survive. It was Boswell who began the new method of biography, and in Lockhart he has his one worthy disciple. To their method, or at least to Lockhart's, Mr Carlyle urged objections, asking for the picture of a man and not for the materials out of which a picture might be made. The taste of the age has preferred the array and accumulation of documents, of everything that can enable the reader to draw his own conclusions. In compliance with custom, this book is composed, or compiled, out of letters, diaries, speeches, anecdotes, reminiscences. On any other principle it might have been brief indeed; but, even had it been deftly designed, much of personal and something of political history would have been omitted. Probably no biography, brief or copious, of Sir Stafford Northcote can greatly alter the general estimate of a character so pellucid, of a life in which subtlety can find so little to be subtle about. His task has not been easy to a biographer little versed in affairs, and much occupied, day by day, by the day's various and inevitable work in other fields. But Sir Stafford himself was much more than a man of affairs—he was also a student: his interest in letters was vivid, and in letters whatever was finest in his intellect found congenial busi-

ness. He touched other worlds than the political by his constant concern for all that is best and most enduring in literature. To the familiar air of his young studies he returned, to use his own happy phrase, like the medieval mariner who went round the world without knowing it, and found himself at last in a land where they spoke his own speech—in fact at home again. In literature, in the best literature, Sir Stafford was always at home, dwelling with Virgil and Shakespeare, Dante and Scott, Ford, Marlowe, and Molière. On this aspect of his life it has been a peculiar pleasure to dwell.

The biographer has been aided, in an unusual degree, and with no common kindness, by Lord Iddesleigh's family. His thanks are particularly due to the Dowager Lady Iddesleigh—by whose care all documents have been presented to him in the most serviceable shape—to the present Lord Iddesleigh, and to Sir Thomas Farrer. The biographer has also to thank Mr Alfred Haggard for much help with copious correspondence, and especially for assistance in writing the chapter on Reformatory Schools. Another chapter, on Lord Iddesleigh as a Leader in Parliament, is based on a manuscript by a friend, who is infinitely more competent than the biographer to deal with that special topic.

In many places, above all in the story of the later years, much of moment and interest has necessarily been omitted. Mr Carlyle has dispraised the idea that the feelings of living people should be spared, in memoirs of the recently dead. But he did not observe that, while the story re-

mains for its date, with its own rendering of events, surviving contemporaries have no such comparatively permanent opportunity of telling their own tale, which may differ considerably, in colouring especially, from that which is told about them. George Sand has been accused of confessing the sins of her neighbours. If towards Lord Iddesleigh any persons sinned, or seemed to sin, in the official affairs of his closing days, they may make their own confessions. The least selfish of politicians would have been the last to desire discussion and debate over his grave—and that discussion, as usual, hot, passionate, and inconclusive. He who never grumbled shall not have grumbling done for him. The biographer may end in the words of Tacitus, as rendered by his old English translator, and may hope concerning his task, that "as being in discharge of duty, and carrying profession of kindness, it shall either abroad purchase praise, or be covered at least with some courteous excuse." And, as the old translator renders his author, "if there be any place for the ghosts of good men, if, as wise men define, the soules of great persons die not with the body, in peace mayest thou rest, and recall us . . . to the contemplation of thy vertues, which are in no sort to be sorrowed for, or bewailed, but rather admired."[1]

[1] The Life of Julius Agricola. Written by Cornelius Tacitus. London: Mdcxxii.

LIFE OF THE EARL OF IDDESLEIGH.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS.

THE FAMILY OF NORTHCOTE—ANCESTRY—THE FIRST BARONET IN THE LONG PARLIAMENT—PARENTAGE OF SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE—HIS SCOTTISH DESCENT FROM THE COCKBURNS—THE "BORDER WIDOW"—INFANCY—PRECOCIOUS LOVE OF BOOKS—FIRST SCHOOL—EARLY COMPOSITIONS—EXTRACT FROM A ROMANCE—ETON—FIGHTS—AMUSEMENTS—FRIENDSHIPS—RETURN FROM SPORT TO STUDY—GOES UP FOR THE BALLIOL SCHOLARSHIP—HIS SUCCESS ON THE RIVER—READS WITH MR SHIRLEY—RELIGIOUS OPINIONS—GOES INTO RESIDENCE AT BALLIOL.

THE family of Northcot—or Norcot, as it was occasionally written in the seventeenth century—is of very old standing in Devonshire. The pedigree preserved at Pynes traces the history of the house to within half a century of the Conquest (1103), when Galfreidus de Northcote was "Northcote of that ilk," holding the lands near Barn-

staple, whence the family name is derived. A John de Northcote was sheriff in 1354. As new estates were acquired by marriage or purchase, the family frequently changed its seat. Under Mary Tudor we hear of "Norcot of Kyrto," or Crediton, and this Walter Northcote was great-grandfather of the first baronet. The father of the first baronet was John Northcote, who was a justice at quarter sessions late in the reign of Elizabeth, and who survived till 1632. Mr A. H. A. Hamilton, in his 'Note-Book of Sir John Northcote,'[1] suggests that the Parliamentary baronet's politics may have been influenced by his father's experience. He had been tried by the Star Chamber—

"Probatus
Stellatâ camerâ,"

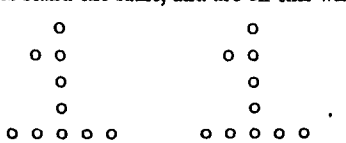
and though he came "like gold out of the furnace," the incident may have rankled. Mr Hamilton very plausibly guesses that Justice Northcote had been slack in collecting Ship-money in 1627. A curious family legend about his luck in cards seems (to the sceptical mind) possibly a mere myth invented to explain the designs on a decorated card-table, which must have been made long after the sods were over Justice Northcote. According to the story, Justice Northcote won the manor of Kennerleigh from a Mr Dowrish, at piquet, and the "hands" held are inlaid on the table.[2] Similar tables

[1] London, 1877, p. xii.

[2] In a letter to his eldest daughter in 1877, Lord Iddesleigh thus describes the table: "When we were at Kennerleigh the other day, I went over to Dowrish to see *the* table. It is very curious; it is made of dark grey marble, with the cards and counters inlaid in white marble. It

are common in Hampshire country-houses, and we may conclude that this Northcote obtained a traditional repute as a gambler merely because of the decorated card-table. This, at least, is a modern method of dealing with old beliefs, which may, after all, survive the method. The Justice had twelve sons, of whom John, the first baronet, was the eldest. He sat for Ashburton in the Long Parliament in 1640. His memory is preserved chiefly by the Note-Book he kept in the House in 1640 and in 1661. He died in 1676. On January 14, 1641-42, he spoke on a proposal to diminish the king's jealousies of the House, but was so interrupted that "he was fain to give over before he had intended." Parliamentary manners have always, apparently, leaned towards the bearish. Sir John seems to have had an idea of crowning Charles II., then a boy. He is said to have commanded a regi-

seems that the Dowrish (who was the dealer) held the four aces, the four kings, and the four queens, which certainly looked like a hand to win on. Our ancestor had knave, ten, nine, eight, seven in spades, the same in diamonds, and two other cards (ten of hearts and seven of clubs), and he had to count first; so it is easy to see that he got the point, and also *two* quints, and thus a repique, which would make him (according to our mode of reckoning) ninety-five before playing. He would count one more by playing the knave, but I don't see how he got beyond ninety-six, unless he had already marked for a *carte blar he*, of which there is no evidence. The markers on both sides stand the same, and are on this wise—



Now you have a puzzle to puzzle your friends with. Perhaps the markers mean that each of the two players had already scored equally, and that it was not the beginning of the game."

ment in the West during the first two years of the Rebellion. He was active in the defence of Plymouth, and took part in a battle where the Cornwall men ran away, and the Devonshire men were too neighbourly to pursue them hard. Like Dicæopolis of old in Aristophanes, Sir John tried to arrange a private peace between Devonshire and Cornwall. The House of Commons prevented this; but the scheme showed a spirit of compromise and goodwill, which became, perhaps, hereditary. He was once prisoner to the king's forces, was released, and laid down his arms after the passing of the Self-denying Ordinance. He represented Devonshire in the Parliament of Richard Cromwell. He opposed Cromwell's House of Lords. "I did fight against an exorbitant power in the king's hands, and I will fight against it to the last drop of blood, ... whenever such power shall be set up, if it be to-morrow, and in whatever hands it be." He sat in the Convention Parliament, and appears to have welcomed the Restoration heartily. In later years he spoke always on the side of clemency and amnesty. As "an old man," he argued in defence of the interests of women voluntarily living apart from their husbands. His epitaph —he died in 1676—ran:

"Ita vixi ut non pudet vivere, non piget mori."

His son, Sir Arthur, signed the violent order against Nonconformists at the time of the Rye-house Plot. His second wife, from whom Sir Stafford Northcote descended, was a sister of Sidney Godolphin. The later ancestors,

between the member of the Long Parliament and the statesman of yesterday, made no particular figure in history, and the honourable record of their days need not be dwelt on here.

Stafford Henry Northcote, best known as Sir Stafford Northcote, and at the end of his life first Earl of Iddesleigh, was born at 23 Portland Place on the 27th October 1818. According to a horoscope drawn before he entered Parliament, all his planets were in the ascendant, and the stars prophesied for him a career of success, despite "the contrary planet Saturn, which indicated ill-health and accidents." He was the eldest son of H. S. Northcote, eldest son of Sir Stafford Northcote, Bart., and his mother was Agnes Cockburn, daughter of Mr T. Cockburn. Through Miss Cockburn, Sir Stafford inherited Scottish blood, and was connected with a remarkable family and a romantic history. He had the blood of Border reivers in his veins. The Cockburns trace back to Piers de Cokburn, of that ilk, and of Langton, at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Sir Stafford's mother descended from James Cockburn of Selburnrigg, whose grandson was a Cavalier, and was exiled under Cromwell. The most famous member of the house, in old times, was William Cockburn of Henderland, beside St Mary's Loch. This gentleman was beheaded by James V., at the time when Johnnie Armstrong also suffered. The tradition that Cockburn was hanged over his own gate is incorrect; he was beheaded "by favour of the king." The beautiful ballad makes his wife say—

"But think na ye my heart was sair
When I happit the mouls on his yellow hair?
O think na ye my heart was wae
When I turned about awa to gae?
Nae living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain;
Wi' ae lock o' his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for evermair."[1]

From his mother, whose diary contains a sufficient expression of her pious and amiable character, Northcote inherited that spirit of religion which is so visible in his early letters and in the peculiar form of concern with questions of theology which occupied his youth. A sketch of his early childhood by his grandmother, Lady Northcote, shows that he was not only a remarkable child (as all the first-born of all families are remarkable), but that he really was rather unusually quick and intelligent. Some children are born bookworms, and make themselves happy with the pictures in fairy tales even before they can read. It is recorded of the little boy, in December 1820, that he amused himself in the carriage by "reading 'Puss in Boots' and 'Mother Goose' by turns." That he actually studied these masterpieces is improbable or impossible; but he knew his letters before he was two, and could read a chapter in the Bible when he was four. Lady Northcote credited him with "a very strong imagination, which, however delightful, ought to be subdued as leading to further trouble." Mr Gladstone,

[1] Border Minstrelsy, 1833, vol. iii. p. 94. The House of the Cockburns of that Ilk. By T. H. Cockburn Hood. Edinburgh, 1888.

later, made a similar criticism. This peril was avoided as is generally thought, and so was any risk of danger from the occurrence of "fits of passion" that in early childhood beset a temper naturally very sweet.

Mrs Northcote's diary contains the brief records of his infancy—a happy age passed in stormy times, when the affair of Queen Caroline and the earlier agitations for Reform were disturbing the land, and when mobs vexed the cities and terrified the gentry in their country-houses. Of all these troubles and rumours childhood is, fortunately, insensible; and when Stafford went to the Rev. Mr Roberts's school at Mitcham (afterwards removed to Brighton), he took with him a placid temper, and an eager, kindly spirit.

He was eight years old when he made this first, and commonly least agreeable, entrance into life. His very earliest letters reveal a contented heart and some sense of humour. The imagination, whose excesses were dreaded by his grandmother, had already flowered into a novel composed for his brother and sister (1824). This fiction contains the elements of all romance; and, in the very second sentence, we find a piece of wood which, when sat on by the heroes of the tale, turned into a trap-door, and opened the way into a subterranean staircase. The supernatural is then introduced with a rather lavish hand, for some sheep which alarmed the adventurers by screaming were changed into monkeys by a magician. Finally, a palace arose by magic, and disappeared as rapidly, leaving six men and women and a thousand children ("some of them orphans") without house or home.

These were domestic recreations; but his first letter from school, in September 1826, proclaims him "very happy." At a rather later period he mentions an original and admirable philosophic system of his own for being "happier every day." In 1830 he displays an interest in politics, and proposes a short way with Radicals. "Tell Cecilia that I hear the Radicals are burning the farms at a terrible rate, so she had better get a bucket of water to put out the fire." The singular performances of a "new boy" are also recorded. This neophyte put his head through the carriage-windows as he was being brought to school, and next day repeated the exploit on the bedroom window, "cutting his throat, but not very much." In 1830, on the point of leaving Brighton, he anticipates flogging at Eton; nor was his forecast falsified. "I hear Mr Coleridge is terribly strict, and likes to get boys flogged." In spite of the high spirits which his boyish letters reveal, he retained, at a volatile age, his religious habits. A letter from Mrs Northcote, of 1830, tells how he and Carew, a schoolfellow, used to read the Bible to each other "in whispers." As to school-work, Mr Roberts's reports show that he was quick enough, finding "Bland's exercises too easy," but was rather casual and inattentive. His verses are said to be good, and he is beginning Sapphics. His English verses at this date (1830) seem creditable, though of course they imitate the moods of English heroic poetry. Writing on the battle of Philippi, he says:—

"The warlike hero fame and laurels sought;
The patriot for his country's freedom fought.
How changed the scene when Dian's silver beam
Shone through the darkness on the mountain stream!
The silvery waves were dyed with purple blood,
The dead had checked the progress of the flood."

There must have been fearful carnage.

A more ambitious and probably a voluntary effort is a drama on the "Return of Ulysses." By a singular deviation from Homer, the Wooers are invited to draw the bow of Ulysses, and to shoot, not through the axes, but through a "beauteous ringlet" of Penelope's hair. There is a good deal of action in the piece, which remains a fragment, breaking off where the Wooers insult Ulysses at the feast.

In April 1831, Stafford Northcote went to Eton, to the house of the Rev. E. Coleridge. He was extremely fortunate in his tutor—a member of a family allied by ancient friendship with his own. Mr Coleridge took a careful and paternal interest in the development of the characters of his pupils. He was, though a schoolmaster, a person of humour and sympathy, and considerable bodily skill and address. Without any touch of the austerity of Dr Arnold, at that time ruling Rugby, and without any idea of leading the boys into the ways of "moral thoughtfulness," Mr Coleridge set before each of them a clear view of his duty, in a practical sense. He is described as "personally a great charmer"; and he had the habit, not over common in schoolmasters, of regarding the freaks of schoolboy spirits as absurdities rather than as high crimes

and offences. Perhaps the tendency of Eton discipline at that date varied too much between applications of the maxim "boys will be boys" and applications of the birch. Goodall was provost, and the famous Keate was head-master. About Keate volumes have been written, and leave an impression that the soul of a martinet post-captain, of Smollett's date, informed the body of the fiery little flogging head-master. Hearing that a boy was addicted to excessive religiousness, "I'll flog him," said Keate; "it's all conceit." But it was not for this unusual offence that he not infrequently flogged Stafford Northcote.

The new boy, according to Mr Coleridge's letters to his father, brought from Brighton the essentials, but not the graces, of good scholarship. He entered the Lower Remove of the Remove. "This is as high as could be expected or wished." The custom of the school permitted no higher promotion. The earlier reports announce improvement in various ways; but there came a period of two years during which Stafford Northcote seems to have sown a kind of innocent wild oats. A "want of constant purpose was complained of"—probably the boy was at the height of boyish high spirits, trailing his watch in the water behind his boat, and had not yet seen (not such an easy thing to see) what reason there is for application. Probably most of us remember such a period in our own lives. There is a date in the life even of a clever schoolboy, when school-work seems the abomination of desolation. One has not yet learned to feel the charm of the ancient

literatures; we have not yet heard Circe's song, and are only toiling,

διὰ δρυμὰ πυκνὰ καὶ ὕλην,

through the thicket of verbs and cases. Meanwhile cricket and the river and a hundred amusements are calling to us, and who can be deaf to their voices? It is no great crime to have listened to them; but he who follows pleasure at school too eagerly very seldom recovers himself, or learns there the lesson of industry.

The kindness of Colonel Anstruther Thomson furnishes a few notes on Stafford Northcote at a date when he and Northcote were

> "Two lads, that thought there was no more behind
> But such a day to-morrow as to-day,
> And to be boy eternal."

Their friends were "Lobby" Carew, afterwards Lord Carew, Herries, Farrer, and "Keggs" Gisborne. Northcote's name was "Tab," derived from a singing-boy whose fair hair resembled his. "I remember Gisborne and Northcote in the playing-fields, hurling long reeds for javelins at each other, quoting Homer, and fancying themselves Grecian warriors." Much in the same way, Shelley is said to have spouted hexameters after the first, and successful, round in his one fight at Eton: after the second round he fled, like Hector about the walls of Troy. In winter they "toodled"—that is, chased small birds in the hedges till they were blown, and then captured them. Northcote was in the "Victory." As to lessons, "I," says

the Colonel, "was very idle, and had no turn for doing verses. Northcote could compose them almost as quickly as he could repeat them, and used to help me with them."

One very hot morning I came in, and found "Tab" at breakfast in his shirt-sleeves, and his coat hanging over my chair. "Tab, take your coat off my chair." "I shan't," quoth he. "If you don't, I'll chuck it out of the window." "Shan't," he repeated. Away went the coat, and floated into the tutor's garden. Unfortunately it was Monday morning, and Tab said, "You may finish your verses for yourself." That week the verses were a very inferior lot, and my tutor was very much puzzled to know the reason why. However, we soon made it up, and were better friends than ever. My tutor was always afraid I should influence Northcote for evil, as I was very idle, and fond of field-sports.

We used to have card-parties, and sit on the floor playing at *vingt-et-un* for halfpence. Once Northcote had to go away in the middle of a game, having lost about two shillings. He handed over to the boy who took his place a sheet of paper with these words: "Here is a schedule of my debts, and here is the sum of my possessions," giving him one halfpenny.

At other times we had singing-parties. A favourite song of Northcote's was called "The One-Horse Shay."

I left Eton at Christmas 1834.

In 1841 I was in the 13th Light Dragoons, and quartered at Exeter, and was very often at Pynes. Northcote's father and grandfather were both very kind to me. He was not at home, and I think was at that time private secretary to Mr Gladstone. I did not see him again for nearly thirty years. In 1871, when I was at Torquay, I met him out shooting with Sir Walter Carew at Haccombe. William Fortescue of Fallapit was also there: he had been at Eton with us, and was a great friend of Northcote's. I was several times at Pynes that winter. I and my second son were there for some festivities and a ball in Exeter,

at which Northcote danced like a boy. The next morning he recounted his experiences of fox-hunting in America to my boy, in which the great merit of the chase was that the fox ran eight-and-twenty times round the same field!

Sir T. H. Farrer adds that nobody did so many verses for other boys, and that, through life, he was "always doing other boys' verses." The verses were not of the first quality, they were turned out "like tape off a reel." I am reminded of an Etonian friend who did another boy's verses, giving him the Latin, line for line, as he read out the English. And the other boy was detected the poetry being obviously above his calibre.

Thanks chiefly to Mr Coleridge and to a certain Mr Carr, a clergyman of his acquaintance, Northcote ceased to live for mere amusement. Eton at that time, perhaps at any time, might easily be made a Castle of Indolence. For 670 boys there were then but ten assistant masters. The system of shirking was carried to primitive and almost prehistoric lengths. The history of shirking must be a long one. When the mother-in-law of an Australian black meets her son-in-law, she is expected to hide in the bush. But, if no bush nor other place of concealment be available, she may hold up a stick in front of her face, and is then technically regarded as hidden, and not to be recognised. In the same way at Eton, if a tutor met a pupil where no pupil should be, it was technically sufficient for the boy to hide, or "shirk" behind a lamp-post, and no notice was taken of the irregularity. Probably Stafford Northcote was

more or less irregular in his earlier years at Eton. Sir Thomas Farrer remembers one cross-country expedition, wherein an essential part of Northcote's raiment—his trousers, indeed—was torn, and pinned up by Sir Thomas with thorns, so that the student was able to take an uneasy seat in chapel, without exciting remark. In a letter to Mrs Northcote (May 1831) Stafford observes, "I have been flogged three times—once for not being able to construe the Greek Testament, once for not knowing some questions about my map, and once for not going to my tutor in pupil-room after four." These were sins of omission. He adds, comfortingly, "Gisborne is my great *con.* He is one of the *literatissimi*, or very learned, into which I mean to get soon!" He is next found meditating a breakfast-party, and asking his grandmother for "some sock," which, being interpreted, means "a couple of chickens, a ham, and some marmalade." Presently he confesses, in the most amiable spirit, to "my incorrigible idleness and love of play." And the play had been worth seeing, for Eton had beaten M.C.C., with the renowned Mr Ward, in the first innings. Stafford "has not had a fight in the playing-fields yet, but has seen several." "You generally," he remarks to his mother, "have two fellows to back you up and give you a knee, with a jug of water in case you faint." Fancy the pious and tender mother perusing these particular accounts of a son's education, stated in this oddly personal manner! Then we have the details of a rattling mill between

Walsh and Bowler. Walsh did not get one hit in the face, but he cut his knuckles on Bowler's teeth — an accident most incident to fighting. The son adds that he "caught out Baring the other day, *mirabile dictu.*" He was too short-sighted to be a cricketer, though his turn of speed was so great that he is said to have been chosen to run for boys in the eleven, who happened to be lamed. But a short-sighted man, however swift of foot, can hardly, I fear, be a sound judge of a run. At hockey he excelled, thanks to his turn of speed. According to one letter (July 1831) Gisborne and Leycester are Northcote's "great *cons.*" Baring is always in mischief, and being flogged. Northcote has just "done forty hexameters on the works of God"—a kind of Etonian and orthodox *De Rerum Naturâ.* An illustration, in the style of Mr Thomas Traddles, depicts "a fight in the playing-fields." We see the champions at rest on the knees of their respective backers; then there is a counter, both men getting home heavily; observe the anxiety of their seconds. Finally, a knock-down blow; seconds consoling the vanquished. *O si sic omnia!* and "what a pity that these fine ingenuous boys should grow up into frivolous members of Parliament!" At this period (July 1831) Stafford Northcote occupied the undistinguished place of "lag" in his form. But he was "hardly at all bullied, for most of the bullies are very stupid fellows, and I construe them," or "give them construes," as other grammarians might put it. Very early in the following half he "has not been

flogged *yet.*" In a year he gets into tails, and is "not much baited about *them,* but about my brass buttons." One of the fellows who messes with him "has got a fag, so we are getting fine and lazy." By February 1834, he announces that he has begun to do Greek verses—Wolsey's speech on fallen greatness in "Henry VIII." His tutor thinks that, if he works hard, he may get a scholarship at Christ Church in 1836. But greater schoolboy success than a scholarship at Christ Church awaited him. The beginning of 1834 seems to have been a turning-point in his life. On December 9, 1833, his tutor wrote about him to Mr Northcote, speaking of "the inequality of his performances and the utter want of constant purpose in his character." Mr Coleridge had even resolved to recommend that Stafford should be taken away. He had "a disposition too inclined to sacrifice itself to the solicitations of others." "Having so resolved, I communicated my resolve to Stafford, urging him at the same time by every argument in my power to relieve me from the necessity of doing my duty in so painful a way. I rejoice to tell you that my exertions have not been in vain. He is an altered creature, and now I really think so much to be depended on for constancy and energy, as he was before the unresisting victim of any one who would practise on his good and too easy nature." The boy has proposed to try for the Newcastle Scholarship, and "being now fully aware of his past irresolutions and idleness, he will for the future consider it no less a point of honour than a duty and pleasure to seek literary dis-

tinction by steady and well-directed industry." At this date he composed an essay on "Tails," of somewhat Darwinian tendencies. At home his sister, Mrs Lushington, remembers how fond he was of reading, and of concealing himself from domestic distraction and the calls of society in the boughs of a favourite tree. The rest of the family, one of whom recalls these memories, were Cecilia, afterwards Mrs Bishop; Henrietta, the lady just mentioned; and Mowbray, who took holy orders.

In November 1834, Stafford Northcote writes to his grandfather that he is thinking of going up for the Balliol Scholarship, which then was, and perhaps is now, the first College honour in the eyes of ambitious schoolboys. Some Greek iambics of his in 1835 show no very great skill in the art, and are like "lady's Greek, without the accents." In June 1835, he first appeared "in knee-breeches and silk stockings," among the declaimers on Speech-day. He mentions, too, that he "takes long walks with Hobhouse," now Lord Hobhouse, and with his friend and future brother-in-law, Farrer. In March 1836, he describes his feats at Oxford. He did what every Oxford man remembers doing; he dined, and wined, and breakfasted with old schoolfellows; and said *do fidem* to the College statutes, without very clearly understanding their substance. He signed, without misgiving, the Thirty-nine Articles, now obsolete for this purpose; was formally matriculated, paid fees, and lunched. He had already tried, unsuccessfully, for the Balliol Scholarship; and his grandfather, Mr Cockburn, at this time writes about him, to Mr Northcote,

as "our future statesman!" In April 1835, Mr Coleridge mentions not only Northcote's improvement in scholarship, but "his increased openness of manner, and the general manly uprightness of his mind and actions."

This was the character Northcote brought with him to Oxford, and into life. Before entering on residence at Balliol, he read for some time at Shirley, with the Rev. Mr Shirley. But it may be as well, here, to review his course at Eton. He was, it has been said, extremely fortunate in his tutor, Mr Coleridge, and not less happy in his friends. Of school friends his earlier *cons*, or *conns*, do not remain the most prominent. We hear more of the Hobhouses, and of Thomas Farrer, whose sister he married not long after leaving Oxford. As has been said already, he never was much of a cricketer; but he began to scull in 1832, and it was soon noticed that he sculled well. (Here I am indebted to "The Eton Days of Sir Stafford Northcote," an article in 'Temple Bar,' 1884). He was asked to cox one of the long boats, but declined, which need not be regretted, as the temptations to intellectual arrogance and social levity that beset a cox are generally recognised and deplored. Hence, indeed, the adjective "coxy." In 1834 he entered "The Boats," (Third Upper, now "Prince of Wales"). In 1835 he rowed in the Eton eight. A Balliol scholar who had pulled bow in the Eton eight has never been a common addition to the College. From the article in 'Temple Bar,' I venture to extract this account of Northcote as an oarsman, for there is a great deal of character

in rowing. He was not addicted to the poetic pleasure of solitary sculling.

Shortness of sight prevented him from taking to cricket, . . . when wet-bobbing was the pastime of the faster set. In the summer half of 1832, Northcote began to scull pretty regularly on the river, and was soon noticed for the neatness of his oarsmanship. As he was small and of light build, an offer was made him to steer one of the long boats, which he declined; but it was predicted of him very early that he would become one of the best oars in the school, and this came to pass. In 1834 he entered the Boats, and was placed at once in the "Third Upper," now called "Prince of Wales," but then "Adelaide" after the Queen Consort; in 1835 he rowed in the school eight, and going to Oxford, he pulled for a Balliol boat. It has been stated that Northcote was put into the "Adelaide" when he entered the Boats in 1834. This was no small honour, for a boy almost always began by pulling in one of the Lower boats. The non-Etonian reader may be reminded that the Lower boats were not reserved for Lower boys. The "Boats" was the term applied to a rowing club formed by the crews of one 10-oar and seven 8-oars—all of whom were required to be Upper boys. In 1835, Northcote was captain of the "Adelaide" and "bow" of the eight. There was no race against Westminster that year, and Northcote only pulled in one important school race (Upper Sixes), which he lost. One of his old companions in the eight writes of him:—

"Northcote pulled in the perfection of Eton style—with grace and neatness. He sat up well, always got a good grip of the water, with a strong, clean cut, and feathered neither too high nor too low. The best of him was his sweet temper. He worked as much as the heaviest man in the boat, but never grumbled or looked tired, or took anything amiss. I remember once we were run into by a large 'tub' full of Cockneys near Lower Hope. I am afraid we all used some rather ornate

language except N., who, without a word, set himself to stop up a hole in the 'bows' by stuffing part of his coat into it. When we got back to Rafts it turned out that N. was the only one of the crew who had got hurt, for the bow of the Cockney boat had bumped his shoulder rather badly. He was just as philosophical in the debates at 'Pop,' taking chaff and contradiction very coolly, but waiting for you round a corner, as it were, and confronting you with some unanswerable argument when you had ceased to expect it. His placidity made you think he had no strong opinions, but he never cared to join in the first fray of a debate, when everybody was anxious to speak. . . . He used to listen to what others said, and was clever at reviving a debate which flagged. He was not reckoned one of our best speakers, for he only stood up when he had something to say—adding nothing by way of rhetorical ornament."

From April to October 1, 1836, Northcote read with the Rev. Mr Shirley at Shirley Vicarage, Derby. From a letter written by him in 1848 (February 27) to Mrs Shirley may be gathered the principal facts about his residence with his tutor.[1] Northcote was then the only pupil, and found Mr Shirley interested, like himself, in the classics, and heraldry, rather an unusual theme. Mr Shirley "generally took occasion to give a religious turn to our conversations on every subject," though heraldry scarcely lends itself directly to religion. Northcote, to please his tutor, at first taught in his Sunday-school. He had a very high opinion of the unobtrusive piety of his preceptor, which, indeed, coincided with his own frame of mind through life. Seldom has a modern man of so much intellect been so utterly unvexed by specu-

[1] Letters and Memoir of Bishop Shirley, p. 217.

lative doubts and anxieties. This freedom was part of his greatest natural gift, the gift of Happiness. He was soon, however, to be engaged, perhaps was already engaged, in one of those religious crises which early manhood, if at all intelligent, seldom escapes. In Northcote's case, as will be seen, neither doubt, nor a tendency to the Catholic doctrine, was the cause of much hard thinking and considerable anxiety. Rather he was possessed by a desire to believe more and to hope more than is consistent with a conventional orthodoxy within the Church of England. In the quiet of Shirley he felt "a peculiar happiness and serenity," which certainly does not seem consistent with a theory that he was already much concerned with the mystic speculations and the Irvingite dreams which slightly disturbed him when at Oxford.

On turning to his correspondence with his family at this period, it seems that he "felt rather out of his element" when teaching in Sunday-school, though he was very much in his element, later, with the boys at his own Reformatory near Pynes, on Sunday afternoons. He found Shirley "perfectly odious from those brutes of cats, which are always prowling round, and I do not like to kick them." Sir Walter Scott detected in himself the first sign of age when he came to like a cat. Let it be hoped that as Northcote grew into years so his feelings improved towards a charming animal, the friend of literature and of men of letters.

In writing to his sisters, he takes a somewhat humorous

view of the tract-distributing which was part of his duty at Shirley. Indeed, his letters to his sisters are always affectionately pleasant and diverting, occasionally containing references to a language which they had invented at home. But this tongue, like the speech which the boy in the Scotch legend brought out of fairy-land, is a dead language now, and has left no literature. He conceived, at Shirley, the ambition to try for the Newdigate, the Oxford prize poem. The subject was "The Gipsies," and, as everybody knows, Arthur Stanley was the winner. But very good men have failed to get the Newdigate. And now a happy boyhood ends, or melts into a manhood also happy, "as mortals reckon happiness." Perhaps *les enfances Northcote* may have been dwelt on too long, but we have all been boys: the memories of that age are common to all, whereas all are not yet politicians.

CHAPTER II.

OXFORD.

THE BALLIOL OF SIXTY YEARS AGO—ELECTION TO A SCHOLARSHIP—ARTHUR CLOUGH—INFLUENCE OF MR EDWARD IRVING—LETTERS ON IRVINGISM—RELIGIOUS OPINIONS—UNDERGRADUATE DIVERSIONS—THE BOAT-RACE—READING FOR THE SCHOOLS—THE EXAMINATION—SUCCESS—A FIRST IN CLASSICAL SCHOOLS, A THIRD IN MATHEMATICS—DEPARTURE FROM OXFORD—A LETTER ON IRVINGISM—A LATIN DISPUTE—THOUGHTS ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS—BECOMES PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MR GLADSTONE—LETTER TO MR NORTHCOTE.

NORTHCOTE went into residence at Balliol in the beginning of the Michaelmas term, 1836. The Balliol of that day was very unlike the too pointed edifice of later years. The quadrangle which faces the Broad was not very ancient, but the black and mouldering stone gave an air of respectable antiquity. The inner quadrangle was still "the Grove," the new hall was not built, nor had the old chapel been destroyed, the Jacobean oak panelling been placed in the common room, and the "streaked bacon" chapel of the present day erected. It was quite a small though a distinguished College when Northcote was a

freshman. The Master was "the old Master," Dr Jenkyns, who, properly speaking, made the Balliol of modern times. Of his eccentricities many an anecdote was current, which "won its way to the mythical," as Thucydides has it, and became attached to later Masters as they succeeded each other. The scholarships at Balliol were already renowned prizes, and were attracting a set of young men who made their mark in life. The poem by Principal Shairp on "Balliol Scholars" is somewhat later, but gives a good idea of the Scholars' table, where Northcote now sat, a table of unluxurious fare, as was all the fare in these ancient halls, if the dinners were like those of Balliol in a later generation. But it is on record that the new scholar was a powerful and uncritical trencherman. Probably he did not find fault even with the noted Balliol commons of "haunch of mutton."

His rooms were on the Scholars' staircase, and deplorable rooms the first set that he occupied were. The window commanded a portion of the Master's premises, or rather it would have commanded it, but the glass was frosted, and the casement only opened for an inch or two. The freshman had not been in very robust health, and he was reading for the Balliol Scholarship. However, he does not complain much of the want of light and air, indeed there never was a person less addicted to grumbling. In a letter to Mr Shirley (October 15) he says that Mr Ward was his tutor,—Ward notable later as a deserter to the Roman communion, and famous theological disputer. A good many of Northcote's Eton friends were

up, and, as there were "two very decided sets" in the College, he flattered himself that he was in the better set of the twain.

Amusements and studies at this period interested him much less than religion, though neither books nor the river were neglected. His mother, Mrs Northcote, was a lady of very decided Evangelical opinions. Her letters breathe a spirit of devotion, testify to an absorption, it may be said, in the things of religion, in the vision of another life, that is not, that never can have been, common. Her eldest son, with an affectionate and gentle character, was likely to see religion with his mother's eyes. We have heard how he read chapters "in whispers" with Carew, when he was a small boy at Brighton. There is a kind of tradition that the sight of one of his eyes was injured by reading at the same closely printed Bible with his mother. In Mr Shirley he had found a tutor who introduced religion on every occasion. In his letter to Mr Shirley we find him deploring, on his own part, a want of what our great-grandfathers called *enthusiasm*. His beliefs are thoroughly correct, but the state of his religious emotions does not satisfy him. "I almost fear that my heart has never been really touched, but that I have been rather hurried along by the feelings of the moment, than by any serious change of heart, and that the world will yet be too powerful for me." Northcote then speaks of Goulburn, whom he had known at Eton, and who became head-master of Rugby for a season. Goulburn and Waldegrave were anxious that Northcote should join them in

reading the Bible statedly, with other religious exercises, on Sunday evenings. Sunday evening at College is usually begun with a wine-party, and ends in a vague discussion of metaphysics, ghost-stories, and the immortality of the soul. This kind of exercise, at least, was not uncommon at Balliol thirty years after Stafford Northcote's time. Some men, again, went to many services, others belonged to essay societies—in which essays were never read. It does not appear that Northcote joined Waldegrave and Goulburn.

At the end of November 1836, Northcote was elected to one of the Balliol Scholarships. It is said that he gave an extraordinary proof of memory at this examination. Several years later, at a scholarship examination, a passage from the old 'Spectator' was read aloud, and the competitors were told to write down as much of it as they could from memory. Mr Woolcombe, so well remembered by old Balliol men for his theological lectures, or "catechetics," was the examiner. Seeing that some of the aspirants looked blank, he informed them that Mr Northcote, when trying for the scholarship, had written all the passage out correctly, after but one hearing. He was second to Arthur Clough, and very curious it is to think how like those boys then were in many ways, and what different courses they had to run. Clough was shy, and they were never very intimate. A dozen years later Northcote mentions some vagaries of Clough's in Paris during the Revolution, and the "intoxication" which he then shared, oddly enough, with the French poet, Charles

Baudelaire. But there are no earlier references to Clough in Northcote's correspondence. In several letters he expresses a dislike of Rugby, which he afterwards modified, and perhaps overcame. He appears to have thought that Dr Arnold's liberal tendencies were perilous in religion. Clough was a Rugby boy, but in his school-days, and when he came up first to Balliol, his letters are at least as devout as those of Northcote.

Both young men entered Oxford in one of its recurrent theological crises. As Mr Palgrave says, in Clough's 'Biography': "The University was stirred to its depths by the great Tractarian movement. Dr Newman was in the fulness of his popularity, preaching at St Mary's; and in pamphlets, reviews, and verses continually pouring forth eloquent appeals to every kind of motive that could influence men's minds. Mr Ward was one of the foremost of the party, . . . and thus, at the very entrance into his new life, Clough was thrown into the very vortex of discussion." Mr Ward was Northcote's tutor, but the vortex of discussion did not drag *him* down. Clough harassed himself and wasted his powers and the flying terms on questions which time, *pulveris exigui jactu*, has fairly well settled or stifled. Northcote read and rowed in the College eight, and lived chiefly with the Eton men. One cannot conceive him writing, like Clough, "I believe the Balliol set is truly wise." But he had his own theological difficulties of a very peculiar kind, not solved by the truly wise men of Balliol.

Seven or eight years before this date, the celebrated

Mr Irving had come upon the stage of London as a popular preacher, and more or less as an unpopular prophet. A man of intense devotion and poetic temperament, Mr Edward Irving had been attracted in Scotland by certain psychological phenomena connected with religious excitement. This is not the place to discuss the young lady who "spoke with tongues" unintelligible to mankind. These, she declared, with some humour, were the vernacular of the Pellew Islands, a statement which it was not easy to disprove at a moment's notice. The adventurous maid was the beginner of that talking "with tongues" in Mr Irving's congregation, which became so notorious. The preacher himself, with his adherents, lived in a kind of new dispensation, in which miraculous gifts were being granted to the faithful, and which might herald some fresh revealing of the councils of Heaven, perhaps the Second Advent. Of Mr Irving himself, Sir Walter Scott has left a sketch which I cannot resist the temptation to quote:—

I met to-day the celebrated divine and *soi-disant* prophet, Irving. He is a fine-looking man (bating a diabolical squint), with talent on his brow and madness in his eye. His dress, and the arrangement of his hair, indicated that. I could hardly keep my eyes off him while we were at table. He put me in mind of the devil disguised as an angel of light, so ill did that horrible obliquity of vision harmonise with the dark tranquil features of his face, resembling that of our Saviour in Italian pictures, with the hair carefully arranged in the same manner. There was much real or affected simplicity in the manner in which he spoke. He rather *made*

play, spoke much, and seemed to be good-humoured. But he spoke with that kind of unction which is nearly allied to *cajolerie*. He boasted much of the tens of thousands that attended his ministry at the town of Annan, his native place, till he wellnigh provoked me to say he was a distinguished exception to the rule that a prophet was not esteemed in his own country. But time and place were not fitting.[1]

Mr Irving died on December 6, 1834. But the doctrines of his followers, to which he lent eloquent expression, survived him, and still survive. The Newman Street congregation was the centre of believers in the probability that some strange thing was beginning within the Church. Mrs Northcote inclined very warmly to these ideas: her letters to her son are full of reference to the near and happy future—to the trials of the Church within the Church, as it were—to deacons, angels, and apostles. One of her letters contains a singular anecdote, which has no direct connection with the subject, but discloses a readiness and inclination to accept seriously what are now called psychical phenomena.

Lord C.'s son, a wild young man, formed, unknown to his parents, a connection with a young woman, by whom he had a child. Finding that she was again likely to become a mother, he deserted her, and went with his parents to Paris. One day they were suddenly startled by the most fearful yells from their dog. They all rushed to the room from whence the sound came. There they found the animal in greatest excitement, and their son with a horror-struck countenance. He immediately confessed his sin, and said he had seen the woman's ghost walk from one end of the

[1] Lockhart, ix. 329.

room to the other. Lord C. instantly wrote to a married daughter in town, who went to the poor deserted creature's lodging, and found that at the moment he saw her figure glide through the room, she had died in giving birth to a child. Mrs —— lives in the Regent's Park, and took the poor babe home with her. I believe there is no doubt this is a true statement.

Mrs Northcote's tendency towards the opinions of the Church in Newman Street was not shared by her husband. Stafford Northcote was thus in a difficult and somewhat distressing position, in which he conducted himself with much tact and propriety.

On July 18, 1837, he writes thus to his father, on the matter of their theological differences :—

"I will fairly state to you my opinions on the main subject of your letter, which are — that for the last few months I have felt a conviction of the truth of all that I have heard, so far as that had given me opportunities of knowing the doctrines held by Mr Bridgeman, and others of the same persuasion; but, of course, my knowledge is to a great extent limited, nor could I in any way, were it my business, undertake to answer the objections which might be urged against it. I should be sorry to venture to put *my* opinion against those of others, and especially of such as are better qualified by knowledge or experience to form a judgment than *I* can be; but I do not, on the other hand, wish to allow myself to be swayed by *men*, when I can find a more unerring guide in the Word of God, which

I certainly believe to be in accordance with all that I have heard of the doctrines in question. I do not conceive these to be of such a character as in any way to call upon me to *desert*, or to think less highly than I do, of the form of worship adopted by the Church of England, neither do I believe that any *separation* from that Church is advised or recognised by such men as I allude to; but I am not prepared to speak fully on the subject. Be assured at all events, my dear father, that I should never think of taking any steps in the matter without your full concurrence and approbation, further than retaining *the belief* which I now hold.

"And now, having said my say, it remains only that I thank you for the very kind spirit of your letter, and I am sure that we shall not long be left at variance, but be indeed guided into the right path, if we seek it."

In February he returns to the subject, a subject all the more delicate, as Mrs Northcote's health had given way, and the illness, from which she never recovered, had declared itself. It is indeed curious to note how often the Oxford years of undergraduates are harassed by anxieties about religion, and by domestic sorrows.

"BALLIOL, *Feb.* 24, 1838.

"MY DEAREST FATHER,—I am indeed sorry to hear of mamma's illness; but I do trust, and am sure that it is for good and not for evil, and that she is now recovering from the effects of it. Pray give my best love to her, and

assure her that I have not failed to join my prayers to yours in her behalf. Pray write *soon* to let me know how she is, as one is always most anxious at a distance.

"To come to the second part of your letter. I am glad to have an opportunity of expressing some of my views, which you certainly ought to know, though I could not, of course, put them forward unasked. Remember, however, that I have had but little and indirect communication with the Newman Street Church or others of the same persuasion, and cannot therefore be expected to give anything like a statement of their views on the subject. You ask me first what I disapprove of in our National Church as a body. If by that you mean our Church as viewed in her Articles, I agree with you that she is the purest in existence, and there is not one of those Articles (except that of the headship of the king) which a member of the Church in which I believe should object to sign. Not that the Church of England has been hitherto wrong in holding that Article; but if Christ (according to their belief) has more immediately manifested Himself in the Church of late, He is, of course—and as you would allow if you believed this—superior to any earthly head.

"Now I do not consider that this work *necessarily* implies that God found any particular faults in the Church of England, but rather that He is taking a step *in* that Church by clearing up the minds of men with respect to (1) the *Sacraments*, and (2) the *Ordinances* of the Church. Just in the same way He took a step in the Church at the time of the Reformation; and though the Church of

Rome then rejected His work, and was therefore cast off, yet the step was not a step *out* but *in* the Church. I do not know whether this is clear. 'The Church,' of course, means the *whole* body of believers. Now this body ought to be at unity with itself (Eph. iv. 3, 6), and there ought to be a joining together of all the parts in their respective places, so that the whole building may be fitly framed together, &c. (Eph. ii. 21). For this purpose God set divers ordinances in His Church. These are enumerated in His Church (Eph. iv. 11) and elsewhere. They are—1st, apostles, 2d, prophets, 3d, evangelists, 4th, pastors. And these were given not for a short time, but 'till we all come in the unity of the faith unto a *perfect man*' (Eph. iv. 13). Now, are we that yet? Clearly not. Therefore these ordinances surely ought to continue. And they do exist in the Church of England, though in confusion. The cathedral establishment is a perfect Church. But more offices are crowded upon one than it can bear; thus we have no distinction between *pastors* and *evangelists*, though they have different duties to perform. Hence the difficulty of *preaching*, which is addressed partly to *converted*, partly to *unconverted*, and thus the *meat* is not properly given to the one nor the *milk* to the other (1 Cor. iii. 2, and Heb. vi. 1, 2). This is, then, one of the things which it pleases God to set in order.

"With regard to the Sacraments, the Church of England expressly recognises in her 25th Article that they are more than signs—that they are real life-giving ordinances. But this has fallen into oblivion, and this is

another point which God is clearing out—rather bringing us back to our own profession than giving a *new* view on the subject. These two objects are sufficient, I think, to account for the Lord's work if it be indeed His; but there also appear to be other reasons why a more full revelation should be granted. In the first place, there is the want of *unity* in the Church of England. St Paul entreats the Corinthians to speak the same thing, to be perfectly joined, &c. (1 Cor. i. 10). Do we find this in the Church of England? Is it not much more rare to find two who agree than two who differ? And can this be right? Here you will say: 'How strange that you should speak against disunion, who are yourself making a schism in the Church!' It must appear so to you; but I do not think we can be looked upon as schismatics for retaining the view of the Church of England, who is herself guilty of the schism by departing from her own Articles. Look at the bitterness of spirit between the High Church (who have the form without the spirit) and the Evangelical party, who throw off the form and despise government (2 Pet. ii. 10). Of course I speak of them as a body and not as *individuals*. Another reason which God may have for preparing more especially at this time a body for Himself may be a near, or comparatively near, approach of His coming in glory, when a *bride* must be ready to meet Him (Rev. xix., xxi.) But where is that bride to be found? For it evidently does not mean the company of those who are to be saved, many of whom will remain on earth while Christ and the

bride remain in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17); and whereas 'the bride' will escape from the tribulation which will follow upon the loosing of Satan (Rev. xx. 7), there will still be 'saints' on the earth at that period (verse 9) who shall be persecuted but saved. May not these be they who shall be saved, yet so as by fire? (1 Cor. iii. 11-15.) You will say this is imagination and no argument, and I will not bring it forward as one. But I think I have shown some reasons why the Church of England should be amended and set to rights. I have not room to enter upon your next question—What is my warrant for my present belief?—but I hope to do so soon. Meantime, my dearest father, let us pray for each other that God may enlighten us to see the truth and embrace it with a willing mind, not blown about by every wind of doctrine. If you *study* the Epistle to the Ephesians, you will see most of what I have mentioned, or would do had I room. At present, adieu! Give my best love to mamma and all at Pynes, and hopes for the good health and prosperity of all — and fit weather for Mowbray's voyage to the North Pole. This letter leaves little room for news, which is lucky, as I had none to communicate. Love to G. P. and M., and ever believe me your affectionate son, STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE."

A later letter (Balliol, March 11, 1838) contains a summary of the same opinions. The arguments are urged with a respectful firmness and candour, which speaks very happily of the relations between father and son. On the

whole, Stafford Northcote's position is, that miraculous gifts are not *a priori* impossible, that prophecy leads us to expect them, and that the evidence for their existence deserves careful consideration. But, for his own part, he had no desire to separate himself from that branch of the Church in which he was born. Indeed, as appears from later letters to other correspondents, he held that the Church is one body—in Russia, in Rome, in England—and that a man must cleave to the Church as he finds it among his own people. *Spartam nactus es, hanc exorna*, is his motto; and he even proclaims that were the Church in a man's own land corrupt, and were another division of it pure, he should abide by the religion into which he was born. With this sturdy belief he combined, at least in youth, the opinion that in Catholic countries a Protestant Englishman should attend Catholic services.[1]

To be done with the topic of Stafford Northcote's religious beliefs, it may be enough to say that he continued always a devout son of the Church of England, constant in her communion, and a reverent observer of her ceremonies and services. Members of the Newman

[1] This was an opinion which he altered in later years. His residence in France (1857) gave him a considerable interest in the English Church in Paris, an interest which declares itself in his correspondence. In 1861, he was busy with the affairs and organisation of the Rev. Archer Gurney's Parisian chapel, when a Protestant association "discomposed" him by a circular. Mr Archer Gurney had made views about the Eucharist and about prayers for the dead prominent in what may be called his programme. Now, if the Church was to have Sir Stafford's support, it must be "on the broadest Anglican basis," not the organ of any Church party whatever. The result was that he withdrew his name, and did not, as he had intended, receive subscriptions for the chapel.

Street congregation tried at various times to induce him to declare himself their partisan. Some natural doubts as to his beliefs, and their possible consequences in practice, were entertained, at the time of his betrothal, by the mother of his bride. At the South Devon election of 1855 the "No Puseyite!" cry was howled against him with considerable success. He really was of no party in the Church; but preferred, in the matter of services and ceremonies, a minute attention to whatever was of use and custom. It cannot be said that, as time went on, he used the language of Evangelical zeal as much as he had done in boyhood. He never talked of religion to his family. On the other hand, there is not a particle of evidence to show that modern speculations, theories of evolution, and so forth, in any way biassed his opinions, or interfered with his beliefs.[1] His disposition was not speculative. Even in politics he seldom takes wide views, or glances at events, as it were, from historical and philosophic heights. His intellectual interests were chiefly in pure letters: poetry and our old drama. His natural loyalty kept him steadfast in the worship and in the beliefs of the Church of his ancestors.

The records of undergraduate life are not usually exciting. Northcote wrote a programme of lectures for Mr Vaux, whom he appointed to the Chair of Things in General at Balliol, an important professorship. The

[1] One of the rare references to such topics in his correspondence is a passage in an Eton letter of 1833. Some one gave him "a curious account of some skeletons of animals supposed to have existed before the Creation, *which I cannot quite take in.*"

programme of his course of lectures is extant. They include a discussion of Human Nature, with an account of Whiggism from the earliest times, and a New Theory of the Illumination of the Pyramids. Apparently the learned professor's hypothesis was that the Egyptians were acquainted with the use of gas, but later excavations do not confirm this opinion. A "Scheme for blowing up London University" was of a more practical character. In the anatomical course "the skull of a Whig will be displayed, and shown to be deficient in good qualities." The fourth lecture dealt with nautical affairs, starting from Noah's Ark, and closing with the Balliol Boat and the St John's Boat. In mathematics the professor held out hopes of a "still greater genius than Newton," whose modest home, perhaps, was in "2 Fisher's Buildings, two pair stairs." In politics the curriculum closed with a scheme for a "Grand Massacre of Radicals," in which it is to be feared that Clough might have perished. On the whole, the lectures, as sketched for Mr Vaux, were by no means pessimistic.

In 1839 Northcote was a good deal occupied with coaching his brother Mowbray, and starting him at Eton. He recognised that, as far as Eton was concerned, bullying existed in an inverse ratio to fagging, which he regarded as a beneficent institution. He had very little of it at school, but there is reason to suppose that his younger brother did not take exactly the same view. On April 15, 1839, we again hear of his friend Farrer, with whom he was enjoying the distractions of London, not much in the

style of Gibbon's "Manly Oxonian," but with more discretion. "We went to the panorama of Rome in Leicester Square." He told "some twenty fairy tales" to children, and he rowed on the river, and saw the boat-race, in which Oxford was well beaten, but not without an excuse. When did a beaten eight lack a reason for losing? "One of our men had unfortunately run a splinter into his hand, which was very much swelled. This accounts for our being beaten so hollow, as he was unable to do any good after the first mile. However, it was a fair beating anyhow," he adds, impartially. In place of dining with the crews, he went home, and so to bed at ten, and that is a blameless way of spending the boat-race night. No Cave of Harmony allured him. But the author of this "history," as he calls it (a letter to Mrs Northcote), doubts whether he will be able to read next term, which was the summer term, and the season when the whistle of the cox is heard in the land.

However, in May he is found working hard, "reading with Elder," who is yet remembered by his contemporaries as a very strenuous "coach." "Chapel is over by eight," he writes to Mrs Northcote, "when I have breakfast, and then read till four, when we have dinner, then generally a party till six, when we go down the river till near nine, when we come up to tea or supper, and go to bed at half-past ten." A cricketing man could not have got so much work out of a summer day. He never says much about his boating life, and the historian is obliged to search the records of the river. "I am desirous to wind up my boat-

ing life," he says in a letter to Miss Cecilia Northcote (May 20, 1839), "as I do not suppose I shall ever have much pulling after I have taken my degree." He intends to pull in an Oxford old Etonian crew at Henley against the school, "and this will probably be my last race," over which he expends no sentiment. "The races began on Thursday, but on account of some false starts the first night was not counted; but last night we started second, and, having bumped the Exeter boat, came up at the head of the river, which is a matter of great rejoicing, though we do not expect to keep our place more than one night, as Ch. Ch. and Merton are both likely to bump us in course of time."

Not very many reading men have been able to row in their last summer term and secure their First, while water men have a very strong opinion that the muscles of the studious are absorbed into their brains. The writer cannot, indeed, remember an example of such divided and successful energies as at this time Stafford Northcote was displaying, apparently without any strain. Those who remember him at College say that his facility was extraordinary. Without being brilliant or a wit, he did all things well, and all things with ease. The number of hours during which he read, without a break, astonishes one who has known many hard readers. But it is to be noticed that he kept his afternoons for himself, and never studied after dinner. Even so, for a man to be in training, and yet to read from eight to four, shows unusual strength of constitution, mental and bodily. Training, be it remem-

bered, was harder, harsher, and much more disagreeable in those days than it is now, as any one may read in 'Tom Brown at Oxford.' The victims were tortured by thirst, even the ration of water was very short, and they were compelled to be great eaters of beef and marmalade. Sir T. H. Farrer adds, from memory of these days, "We rebelled against the training, and he especially. His capacity for porter, in the 'Man of Ross,' a great silver College cup, was a thing to wonder at, especially after a race." The "Man of Ross" is a beaker like the "Bear of Bradwardine" or the Cup of Heracles.

In July, Northcote went to Lyme Regis with a reading party under Mr Elder. "I can read as much as I like," he says in a letter to Miss Henrietta Northcote, "which is not above seven or eight hours a-day. I really cannot tie myself down for ten hours, as Holland does, so if I can't get my First without so much reading, I shall just lump it." He disliked the regularity of dinners on eternal mutton-chops, and hated measured "constitutionals." The reading party, like most large reading parties, is said to have included a good many idle men, and they all diverted themselves, and took that part of Horace's advice to the young, which bids them not spurn dances. In October, after leaving Lyme, he writes to Mr Shirley that he is hopeful about his classical degree, but hardly looks for more than a Third in mathematics. He fears that his mother "will be too ill to move to Devonshire this year. We have had a good deal of anxiety about her; but I trust it may be the Lord's will to restore her to us, though

at present appearances are very bad, and the doctors have not any very sanguine hopes. . . . I am learning daily that one ought to live for to-day, and not for any schemes, for they never come to pass." This is pretty nearly Sydney Smith's philosophy. "Take short views," and, indeed, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. To his mother he writes, three weeks before his examination, with natural cheerfulness. "I am in wonderful preservation, with the exception of a slight attack of atrophy, which is swelling my dinner-bills to a frightful amount. . . . Instead of being ill, and in a funk, as most of my neighbours are, I find myself much the same as ever, and go down the river, or play fives every day, as if nothing were the matter." He "put down a list of fifteen books, being probably acquainted with none of them." Nothing alters more, or more frequently, than the examination system at Oxford. In Northcote's time a man who aspired to classical honours was expected to know Aldrich (in Logic, Mill was only coming in), Butler's 'Analogy,' Herodotus, Thucydides, Aristotle (chiefly the Ethics), Tacitus, a good deal of Cicero, and other classic authors, some of whom are now studied in Moderations. We may gather what men *did* read from what Hope, in 'The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich,' proposed to leave unread:—

"Fare ye well, meantime, forgotten, unnamed, undreamt of,
History, Science, and Poets! lo, deep in dustiest cupboard,
Thookydid, Oloros' son, Halimoosian, here lieth buried!
Slumber in Liddell-and-Scott, O musical chaff of old Athens,
Dishes, and fishes, bird, beast, and sesquipedalian blackguard!
Sleep, weary ghosts, be at peace and abide in your lexicon-limbo!

Sleep, as in lava for ages your Herculanean kindred,
Sleep, and for aught that I care, 'the sleep that knows no waking,'
Æschylus, Sophocles, Homer, Herodotus, Pindar, and Plato." [1]

Writing to Miss Cecilia Northcote (November 7, 1839), he says, "There goes the dinner-bell, to whose inspiring sound I am indebted for the prolific vein of genius that pervades this composition! I think I should do wonders in the Schools if they would but put a beef-steak under the table. . . . My complaint is Soul: it expands, it dilates, it urges me to finish my letter and begin my dinner."

Such was the jolly old nonsense of undergraduate days: many of us have written it, few of us forget, all of us regret these years, after which the sparkle is out of the champagne, and the road for most of us—not for Northcote—runs "long and dusty, and straight to the grave." [2]

Few reading men have gone more gallantly into that ordeal—the Schools. Some lose all nerve and heart, to some courage is lent by despair, and their demeanour is jaunty. "Where facts are weak, their native cheek brings them serenely through." But Northcote does not appear to have been half so nervous as most men are at a boat-race, when the first gun has been fired, and the warning comes from the bank, "four minutes gone." However, he wrote to his father (November 13) that, till the first day of the Schools, he "never knew what it was to be overworked. But when I came out of the Schools, I could hardly walk, I was so giddy." By the third day, he

[1] The Bothie, by A. H. Clough.

[2] Robert Louis Stevenson.

"was as fresh as if nothing had happened," and sent his sister Cecilia the following *recipe* for making "Tom trot," which, like figs, as described by Thackeray, is "the never-failing soother of youth,"—"The principal ingredients are brown sugar and lemon and butter. The great point is to keep stirring it *all the time it is boiling.*" His light literature at this time was the 'Arabian Nights.'

By the 15th he was able to report to Mrs Northcote that the examination was over, that he had been rather floored in Logic and the "critical paper," but in all the rest had done as well as he expected. "If good wishes could get me a class, I should have a Double-First ten times over," he adds. The examiners, however, care for none of these things, and "not even Henrietta and Cecilia in tears—touching spectacle—would move them to alter my fate." Some ill-advised person had tried to frighten Mrs Northcote, by hinting that Stafford's leanings towards the Newman Street Church would prejudice the examiners against him! The lady had too much sense to be alarmed on this score; but observed, with truth, that a rumour of his religious ideas would do him no good in competing for a certain fellowship. He put on his gown on November 21 (signing himself B.A. in a letter to his father). On November 28, he was in that "beautiful agony" many of us know, waiting till Farrer and Coleridge (the present Lord Chief-Justice) should bring the news of his class. Apparently it is always a man's nearest friend who does him this kindness. Old things revive at the thought, and dear faces

of youth; old years return, and he who writes remembers. Thus it is that the University makes all her children akin by their kindred memories. "At last," says Northcote, "I heard an immense rush on the stairs, and about twenty men burst in at once, too much out of breath to speak. However the fact was evident; and I underwent a host of congratulations, which have, in fact, hardly ceased for the last twenty-four hours." He could rejoice with others as well as be rejoiced with, and the Master of Balliol remembers the heartiness with which Northcote greeted him when he got his fellowship. "As great success," he wrote about his own case, "is usually accompanied by symptoms of consumption, I hasten to inform you that none such have yet appeared." His mathematical class was a Third, but the First and Third, taken together, were the second-best double honours of the year.

Here his College career ends; he never went in for a College fellowship. In reading his letters, one is much struck by the health and tranquillity, bodily and mental, of years that are usually full of *sturm und drang*. His high spirits, his humour and good-humour, his physical strength, and even his interest in a form of religion not fashionable nor subject of controversy at Oxford, carried him happily through a time that is often trying. Perhaps his inclination to the truth as conceived by Mr Irving was really serviceable. It kept Northcote from breaking his mind against the craggy disputes which engaged Clough and so many others.

There was at no time much risk of his drifting with the other current which ran towards doubt and "agnosticism." For him faith had no Nemesis. He did his work, he played his play, reading hard, rowing hard, —successful in the Schools and on the river,—happy in his affection for his home, and in winning the hearts of many friends.

Though the departure from Oxford makes a break in a man's existence, and is the beginning of a new career, it seems better to continue this chapter till the moment of Northcote's entry on official life. In March 1840, we find him writing to Mr Shirley from the Middle Temple, where he was reading with a special pleader. He had not yet taken possession of his rooms in 58 Lincoln's Inn Fields. In law he expresses a somewhat lukewarm interest, and announces that he is competing, against Arthur Stanley, for the English essay, "Do States, like Individuals, inevitably tend after a period of Maturity to Decay?"[1] He did not gain the prize, and he had now quite made up his mind not to stand for a fellowship anywhere.

On Easter-day 1840, his mother died, after a long and anxious illness. The event could not but increase the earnestness of his religious feelings.

An important letter on the old Irvingite troubles is dated May 15, 1840:—

"My dear Father,—I very often find it easier to express my thoughts correctly in writing than in speak-

[1] Published in 'Lectures and Essays.'

ing; and on that account, as I am very anxious that you should not mistake my views upon the subject of which I was speaking to you last week, I hope you will allow me just to state to you what I then meant to say. You are already aware that I have been for some time induced to believe that the Lord is now speaking in His Church by the mouths of men, as was the case in former times; but you are also aware that it must be impossible for any one to satisfy himself of the truth or falsehood of the claim to such inspiration, without inquiring of those persons by whom the claim is advanced, and seeking whether they have any grounds to support it. Now this I have hitherto had no opportunity of doing; for all my information has been received casually from persons who have for the most part not been actual members, or at least authorities, in the church which advances this claim. Although, therefore, I confess that I am much inclined to believe its truth, yet I do not profess to have sufficiently investigated the subject to express a decided opinion. I know that your opinion is, that it is better for me to let the subject alone altogether, and remain in my present state, neither wholly affirming nor altogether denying the truth of the supposed work. I quite agree with you that it is not right for any one to thrust himself into a needless danger of going wrong by undertaking to argue with those whom he believes to be in error, without very strong grounds for so doing; but when so great a claim is set up, and when a person is induced to think that it is well grounded, surely it cannot be that person's duty to sit still and not

to inquire into the whole matter. For in the present case they who see any grounds for believing the Lord to be now speaking in His Church, and who nevertheless sit still and do nothing, are in fact proclaiming that they do not care whether it is the Lord's voice indeed or not. But you say it is very dangerous for an individual to trust to his own private judgment—let each guide his course by the rules and decisions of the Church. This I admit; but of *what Church* am I to take the decision? For though on this one point the great body of the Church of England would give the same answer—yet on numerous others their answers would be very different—and it would therefore be *absolutely necessary* that I should at length so far rely upon my own private judgment, as to decide which of all those answers I should receive as the true one. And with regard to the weight which the opinions of particular individuals ought to have upon me, I do not deny that it would be presumptuous in me to compare my powers to theirs; yet I cannot therefore allow that I am not to inquire into the truth myself, and giving full weight to the fact that so many good and excellent men are opposed to it, I must yet consider that their opinions are after all fallible, and that many of them on certain points *must be* wrong, because so diametrically opposed to each other.

"And now that I have, I think, fully stated my reasons for wishing to inquire, I wish also to tell you what my principles of conduct are. If you shall still express *a wish* that I should inquire no further, I will in no case do so, further than such casual points as may arise in conversation

with others, and which I may chance to hear of; but I will not either attend any of the services of the church or at all press you to consent to my doing so, because I am convinced that what is begun in the spirit of disobedience and insubordination *cannot* prosper. I will not promise to relinquish my belief, for that I cannot do without strong reasons, but I will not take any outward steps to strengthen it. If, however, you should not object to my inquiring to satisfy my own mind, I further promise that I will on no account take any step, such as leaving the Church of England or joining myself to that now being gathered, without your *free* consent, unless any unforeseen circumstances should occur, however persuaded I may become of the truth of the work. Such are the resolutions to which I have come; and now I would desire to leave the further decision of the matter entirely in your hands. And being quite conscious of the hypocrisy of *talking* of obedience and *acting* in the spirit of disobedience, I am prepared to follow your wishes without requiring your commands. You will perhaps think that I am going a little against this principle in again troubling you after your declared opinion of last week, but my reasons for doing so are twofold. In the first place, I was fearful, as I said before, that I had not sufficiently expressed my wishes and my opinions to you in conversation. And secondly, I think it right to inform you that I have had a conversation with Mr Douglas, not for the purpose of inquiring into the truth of the work, but to discover whether I might, in accordance with his principles, continue in the Church of England, supposing

me to have inquired, and satisfied myself as to the evidence for the present work. His opinion was what I have already expressed, that I not only *might* remain in the Church of England, under present circumstances, supposing me even so thoroughly convinced; but that it would be my duty so to do. Do not apply this as an argument for leaving alone the question as one of small importance; for there is much difference between refusing to inquire, and remaining in the Church of England after inquiry.

"And now, my dear father, it is time to conclude. If I have said anything wrong or out of place in this letter; or if my conduct has not been right, as I know in many instances it has not been, I can but say that I am heartily sorry for it, and that nothing is farther from my thoughts than in any way to act against your authority or to counteract your wishes. That you are grieved at the belief which I am adopting I know, and most sorry am I that it should be so; but with my views it is impossible that I should resign it, until convinced of its futility, and I most humbly pray that you also may be brought to give the subject a fuller attention than you have yet done. I am sure that our merciful Father in heaven, who has given us so many proofs of His fatherly goodness, will not leave us for ever divided upon this important point, but will eventually make His truth as manifest to both of us as the noonday.—With every prayer that it may soon be so, and with all love and duty, I remain, your affectionate son,

"STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE.

"*May* 15, 1840."

In August, Northcote was engaged in a little discussion about certain felicities of the Latin language, in which the Marquis Wellesley was interested. The question was—Can *littus* be properly used for the bank of a lake or river? Lord Wellesley had employed the term with this meaning. Mr Wyatt maintained that *littus* was only the sea-shore. A glance at White's 'Latin Dictionary,' like "index-learning, makes no student pale," and corroborates Lord Wellesley. Northcote took his side, for the honour of Eton, and easily pointed out examples in Ovid, Catullus, and Virgil, where *littus* is equivalent to *ripa*. He also noted that Horace uses *ripa* for the sea-shore. Lord Wellesley remarks: "Mr Northcote's observations prove him to be a sound Latin scholar." "Please God," adds Lord Wellesley, piously, "I will send Ben Wyatt cackling home to his Michaelmas associates." Northcote, in a letter to Mr Shirley, avers himself "profoundly ignorant of German." The Oxford theological tumult of the time was exciting him but little. As Charles Perrault said of the jangle between Port Royal and the Jesuits, "que la question méritait peu le bruit qu'elle faisait;" so Northcote possessed his soul in peace about Tract 90. "I conclude," he says, in a note to Mr Shirley, "that the storm of paper warfare has set in by this time with full violence, as it was evident that it must do sooner or later. I have not yet read any of the recent publications, but shall do so as soon as I have time. 'Newman and the 90,' is to be a parallel to Wilkes and the 45." In the same note he lays down his

arms against Rugby. He has heard of Arnold's recommending Lord Stafford to be sent, not to his own school, but to Eton. "It is very like everything one hears of Dr Arnold's openness of conduct, which even I confess very fine."

The summer of 1841 was partly spent on Circuit, and enjoyably enough. The letters written then are unimportant, but one to Mr Shirley, of October 18, 1841, shows that the state of politics was beginning to depress a man not usually "a croaker." We live in the same stress, or worse, as men have done before, and will do again.

"Great changes have taken place since I saw you last, in which you will probably not rejoice, though for my own part I am in hopes that they are for the better on the whole, and that Sir Robert Peel and his friends will do as much towards the saving of the country as any human *prudence* can be expected to do. If there were a little more security for their acting on fixed Church *principles*, I should be more confident of the ultimate result, but I own myself a bit of a croaker at present. Everything is in so dreadfully disorganised a state, Church and State alike shaken, and men so generally inclined to look to human means of setting all to rights, that the prospect is discouraging enough, or rather would be so, did it not seem that the present condition of affairs was only a prelude to some great working of the Lord. What with Puseyism and Evangelicalism, Popery and Dissent, oligarchy and democracy, we appear to have almost reached a *dignus vindice nodus*.

I am almost afraid to write to you upon these subjects, because I know what you, perhaps justly, think of me; but whenever I do turn my thoughts that way, the whole seems so dark a scene of discord and anarchy, present or fast approaching, that it is difficult to keep one's faith in the ultimate providence of God steady."

In the same letter he mentions his first speech for the S.P.G. and S.P.C.K. at Exeter. "I did not electrify the audience very much."

In June 1842, we find Northcote contemplating a tour in Greece "before Herodotus is quite forgotten." Pausanias does not appear to have been a favourite of his, though an author more valuable to the tourist. Before he could carry out his intention, came the offer of the secretaryship to Mr Gladstone. Mr Gladstone had written (June 28, 1842) to Mr Coleridge at Eton, asking him to name a secretary from among his old pupils. Mr Coleridge named Mr Northcote, with two others. Mr Gladstone's choice fell on him. Mr Gladstone pointed out that the work was hard and the pay scanty. Concerning which he writes to his father:—

"58 LINN. INN FIELDS, *June* 21, 1842.

"MY DEAR FATHER,—Although I would not venture to write to one of my fashionable sisters on such a piece of paper as this, I trust you will be less particular, and therefore make bold to address you on it. To begin at the end, I believe I may almost say I have accepted the offer of the secretaryship (*c'est à dire*, if I have it made to me I mean

to accept it). The facts are these: Rawson, who was my tutor's pupil and late secretary to Gladstone, has been appointed to a place of £1500 per annum in Canada. He is a great favourite of Gladstone's, who, both through him and through Lord Lyttelton (G's brother-in-law), applied to my tutor to know whether he could recommend a successor, mentioning at the same time that he had thought of Ryle, but found he was in orders. My tutor immediately wrote to him mentioning both myself and T. H. F., and giving him, as he informed us, a sketch of our respective lives, characters, and circumstances (which, by the by, I would give something to see), and ending with a strong recommendation of either of us, but more particularly of myself, for whom (on account of my position and prospects, &c.) he thought the situation best fitted. He expects an answer to this letter very shortly, and has little doubt that it will be an acceptance of his proposal, though I do not understand it as *certain*, but rather that Gladstone may be looking out in other quarters as well, and *may* have already lit upon some one, though I think it highly improbable.

"The duties of the situation are principally to open all letters addressed to Mr G., to make notes of their contents and submit them to him, and, after receiving his instructions, to write answers to them; but he requires a person who will be ready to go along with him in all things, and whom he may treat quite confidentially. The requisites, as my tutor expresses them, are chiefly 'modesty, quickness, readiness to oblige, and a ready pen.'

How far I possess any or all of these of course my friends must judge, but I do not dislike the prospect. All this I gleaned from my tutor in less than a ten minutes' conversation, for as usual he was fully occupied; but I think the matter has had his fullest attention, and he is decidedly of opinion that I ought to take advantage of this opening, provided I am prepared to follow up the course to which it leads. T. H. Farrer is also of the same opinion, and I have a very great respect for his judgment, which is the most remarkable for so young a person that I ever met with. I cannot tell you what a comfort he has been to me in making up my mind to all this. Finally, I conceive from what you said this morning, you are also inclined to the scheme; so that I have three good judgments to back my own, which (my own I mean) I of course distrust. I shall call on the Judge [Mr Justice Coleridge] to-morrow morning, and if, as I expect, he is of the same way of thinking, I shall consider the matter as settled, that is, as I before said, supposing I get the offer. From what I know of Gladstone's character there is no single statesman of the present day to whom I would more gladly attach myself; and I should think, from the talents he has shown for business since he came into office, there is no one more likely to retain his position, unless any *revolution* takes place. I believe, without vanity, that I shall be equal to the duties I am likely to have put upon me; and as far as it is possible to conjecture in such a matter, I believe I am likely, from the tone of my opinions, to suit him. At all

ents, I think it is worth trying. I might go on writing to you for ever, putting the matter in all the different lights in which T. H. and I have been looking at it, for I assure you it has had a most careful discussion, but I will not weary you with so doing. *If I can*, I will come out to Roehampton to-morrow evening or next day, but do not expect me; perhaps I ought to be here until I hear from my tutor, as I may have to call on Gladstone.

"I did not make any inquiries about the salary, neither do I consider it material, for I know it will not be anything like an independence; and therefore I do not consider that it would make any difference whether it were £50 or £100 a-year. From some of the particulars of Gladstone's conduct to Rawson, I may conclude that he is a most zealous friend when he is pleased with his client, but all this I consider secondary. I hope you will not take this as a specimen of my letter-writing powers. I think if Gladstone were to see it I should be a gone coon; but I have been scribbling whatever came first into my head, and must beg your pardon if it is nonsense. Please be *very* careful not to mention this to any one yet, and urge the same upon G. P. and M., as nothing is settled. Love to them and the girls. I saw Mowbray: he did not get into any scrape with Hawtrey.—Your affte. son, STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE."

On June 30, 1842, he writes to tell Mr Shirley that he has accepted the secretaryship to Mr Gladstone, "the man of all others among the statesmen of the present day to

whom I should desire to attach myself. My prospects will, of course, depend upon Mr Gladstone's own success, of which, unless there is a regular *bouleversement*, I have not the smallest doubt. . . . A seat in Parliament will probably be considered by-and-by desirable, and any good offices that he can do for me I have reason to believe that he will. The line which is thus opened is one which I have always secretly desired, though I could have been content with the Law. . . . With any other man than Gladstone, I might have hesitated longer. But he is one whom I respect beyond measure; he stands almost alone as the representative of principles with which I cordially agree; and as a man of business, and one who, humanly speaking, is sure to rise, he is pre-eminent."

CHAPTER III.

ENTRY ON POLITICAL LIFE.

REMARKS ON THE ASPECT OF POLITICS—SUDDEN CONVERSIONS OF POLITICIANS—SECRETARYSHIP TO MR GLADSTONE—LETTERS ON MARRIAGE—ENGAGEMENT TO MISS CECILIA FARRER—LETTER ON POLITICS IN GENERAL—HIS IDEAS—OFFICIAL DUTIES—MR GLADSTONE'S CANDIDATURE AT OXFORD—NORTHCOTE'S WORK ON THE NAVIGATION LAWS—THE CHARTIST MEETING—THE GREAT EXHIBITION—HIS DUTIES AS SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION—DOUBTS AS TO CHOOSING A RURAL OR OFFICIAL LIFE—SUCCEEDS TO THE BARONETCY—HIS HEALTH IMPAIRED—LETTERS.

WHEN Stafford Northcote began in 1842 to be more or less actively engaged in official life, English politics were much like what they have been ever since. Just as to-day, the world saw statesmen who,

> "Vowing they would ne'er consent, consented,"

to any demand urged with sufficient animation and "agitation." Just as to-day, politicians protested that this or that course was dangerous, immoral, unconstitutional, and in a couple of years were found adopting it and denounc-

ing all who disagreed with them. Conversions were amazingly sudden and astonishingly complete. Parties found themselves deserted by their leaders, and requested to turn their coats at once, or be called traitors if they refused. Just as in recent years, the parties in power would try to govern Ireland by the strong hand, and the party out of power, though ready to follow the example, would refuse to pass a "Coercion Bill." Already had begun the reign of leagues—of men banded together to make this alteration in the laws, or that the only article of their limited creed. The penny post, the introduction of railways, had already made it easy to keep the country in a frenzy of excitement about some promising reform which has belied its promises. Liberal ideas, and ideas of toleration, excellent in themselves, were urged as usual in a manner neither tolerant nor liberal. It is not very easy to sympathise with either side, where both sides are themselves so defective in sympathy, in understanding of their neighbour's position; where naked interests meet and shock so fiercely; where faction is always far more in men's minds than the public weal. The old order was fighting for life—fighting with eyes dimmed by passion as much as by age. The new inevitable order was making its earlier onslaughts; the cruel strife for existence, the struggles of industrialism, were scarce yet understood. To have played a part for a lifetime in this fray and never to have struck a foul blow—never to have been treacherous, never rancorous; to have carried a "stainless banner white," like Tunstall's at Flodden,

through this confused nocturnal *mêlée*—is the honour of Stafford Northcote, and makes the interest of a generous and blameless career.

In the autumn of 1841 the Whig Administration had gone out, and the Tories came in under Sir Robert Peel. The Tories, and Peel with the rest, had no idea that free trade in corn was actually at the doors. Mr Gladstone was President of the Board of Trade, and in 1841 was mainly responsible for abolishing or reducing the duty on more than half of the articles then actually taxed. Stafford Northcote, as Mr Gladstone's secretary, had no doubt plenty of work to do in this large change; but he was also occupied by private interests of great importance. On July 4, 1842, he writes a long letter from Whitehall to his father. He announces that he is "neither engaged nor in any way committed with any person whatsoever, nor have I at this present time any intention of engaging myself to any one." But the elder Mr Northcote had been writing or speaking to him seriously on the subject of marriage, and he in turn found it desirable to utter his mind with respectful distinctness. "Come what will, my unaltered and unalterable resolution is never to marry for money. I *will not* and *dare not* profane the holy ordinance of matrimony by mixing up such a motive as that of increasing my income with the motives which, I trust, will guide me in my choice of a wife." He presently goes on to say, and his words on a difficult topic are well worth quoting:—

"My own idea of the rights of a father in such a case is

this—first, that *under any circumstances* he has a right to require that his son shall not marry a person who is otherwise than thoroughly respectable; and secondly, that, where the son derives his maintenance from him, he shall have a voice in the amount of fortune which he will require in the lady—*i.e.*, that where the father *makes a sacrifice* in order to enable his son to marry, he may require that he shall not marry on that alone. Such are my ideas of *the rights of the father;* but in my own case I am ready to go further, and to say that I individually consider *the duties of the son* to be such, that I have no hesitation in promising that under no circumstances, even though I may become independent of you in a pecuniary point of view, will I marry any one without your consent as long as you live. I say this, because I feel it is in my power (though it would be a *very* severe trial to me) to endure an unmarried life; but farther I *ought not* and *will not go,* and I wish it most distinctly to be understood (I say it with all respect and dutifulness) that I *will not* marry any other than the woman of my own free and unfettered choice, and that choice I also say will be made without the smallest regard to her pecuniary circumstances or any other than the fitness of the woman in herself to be my helpmate. I hope you will not be angry at this frank avowal, which I consider you have yourself called for, indeed I do not see how you can justly be so. . . .

"What is it that you require? Money? I will endeavour to acquire that in a more laborious way than by marrying an heiress. Rank? I will endeavour to raise my family

in a nobler way than by marrying a peeress. . . . I do look very anxiously for happiness in married life; I believe I am entitled to it, but sooner than violate what I believe to be my filial duty, I am ready to devote myself to a life of celibacy, and seek elsewhere than in marriage my reward."

When a young man says he is ready to devote himself, in certain circumstances, to a life of celibacy, one hears soon after, with no surprise, that he is engaged to be married. And indeed, in March 1843, we find Stafford Northcote writing to Miss Henrietta Northcote, to announce, not, indeed, his engagement, but his hopes of prospering in his suit. A few days before he had discharged the rather delicate duty of congratulating his father on the prospects of his second marriage. Speaking for himself to Miss Northcote, his mind turns to the religious aspect of matrimony. "What could be a greater *misery* than a great *blessing* if we had no hope that it could endure beyond this life? Our joy would be increased here, only that our *misery* might be made tenfold more bitter hereafter. But *now*, every blessing is a step towards the great consummation of all blessings—life in Christ. I used to fear that marriage would deaden my desire for the Lord's coming. I trust it will do quite the reverse, as at present I feel all the more ardent desire for it."

This is one of the last touches in the letters of the old belief of the Newman Street "connection" in the nearness of the Second Advent. The mother of Miss Cecilia

Farrer, the lady to whom Mr Northcote was now betrothed, felt considerable uneasiness about the opinions of her future son-in-law. She seems to have feared that they would lead him into some wild apocalyptic way of life, echoing with tongues, and diversified by miracles. On these not unnatural apprehensions he writes to Mrs Farrer (March 15, 1843):—

"Your principal fear seems to me to be this, that I shall be led away in course of time by a heated imagination and by a fancied sense of duty, or a desire of showing my zeal in the greatness of the sacrifices I am ready to make, to quit my position in society and to break off my social ties—or at least neglect my social duties—in order to devote myself to some wild course of life. I cannot deny that, from the common spectacles which every day presents, and probably from the conduct of many of those with whom I suppose you now identify me, you have too much reason for the fear you entertain; but I can most solemnly assure you that the feelings which I have always nourished and acted upon, and, still more, the explicit teaching which I have received from those of whom you are afraid, and from others whom I am bound to respect, are as diametrically opposed to such conduct as light is to darkness; and I should consider myself guilty of a great sin could I for a moment entertain the idea of entering upon such a course. It is not for me to judge others whom I believe to be now in possession of the truth: they may have their justification before God for the steps they have taken;

I consider that I should have no such justification did I follow in their lines. Our circumstances are different; the measure of light given to us is different; and so I believe will our conduct be different. You will wonder at me, no doubt, for still believing those persons to be under the direction of the Spirit of God, whom at the same time I disclaim as examples. I know that I cannot expect that you should understand me, and I must resign myself to be misunderstood; but I trust you will believe me to be honest in what I say, and that you will allow my future conduct to speak for itself."

These matters were thus cleared up, and on August 5, 1843, his marriage with Miss Farrer secured for Mr Northcote all the happiness to which he had confidently looked forward.

The position of private secretary, even to a chief of Mr Gladstone's eminence, does not, of course, make a man at once a prominent figure in politics. Indeed, for a dozen years, Mr Northcote was but a subordinate, though energetic and trusted, worker in administration, not a force in the House of Commons, or in the country. The letters connected with his official existence at this time are of no momentous interest. His labours were important; he was aiding in the new financial measures of Peel. Mr Gladstone was Peel's right-hand man, and Mr Northcote was Mr Gladstone's. Both were learning their lesson of free trade. But the letters of Mr Northcote are almost silent on his official business. "The general effect of my position is a very pleasing one," he writes to Mr Shirley

in December 1842, "and I hope I am not altogether unprofitably employed. Not the least advantage is being so closely connected with so very admirable a person as Mr Gladstone. I hope I shall be '*nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*'; but if of any one, I would sooner addict myself to his opinions than those of any person with whom I am acquainted." Mr Gladstone's opinions have since been to some extent modified. In a letter to a lady, on his appointment as Mr Gladstone's secretary, Mr Northcote writes: "There is but one statesman of the present day in whom I feel entire confidence, and with whom I cordially agree, and that statesman is Mr Gladstone. I look upon him as the representative of the party, scarcely developed as yet though secretly forming and strengthening, which will stand by all that is dear and sacred in my estimation in the struggle which I believe will come ere *very* long between good and evil, order and disorder, the Church and the World, and I see a very small band collecting round him and ready to fight manfully under his leading. In that band I have desired above all things that I might be found, and though I saw little prospect of my being placed in its foremost ranks, I have always contemplated being one of its humbler members, though with many disadvantages. All those disadvantages seem to be suddenly cleared away, and I am left free to go on in the course which I should desire, and with every possible encouragement."

To return to Mr Northcote's letter to Mr Shirley; he was looking forward to a Conservative vacancy at Exeter,

as a chance of entering Parliament, and was expecting the extreme outbreak of the social war, which was delayed till after his time. It is curious to note what was then his theory of England's chief offences as a State,—neglect of popular education,—and neglect of missionary enterprise! Another expression of Mr Northcote's general political ideas (which he rarely expressed) was elicited by a reading of the 'Politics' of Aristotle, and is contained in a letter to Mr T. H. Farrer (now Sir Thomas Farrer.)[1] He speaks of his lack of opinions on political subjects.

"The reading of the Life of Dr Arnold has quite confirmed me in my idea of setting to work on the 'Politics.' I think I should read history to more profit if I had some formula to test by the facts, because imagination (which, in my case, would mean the study of the imagination of others) must always precede induction. But I hope never again to be without some work of history or biography in hand. I think the effect of Carlyle's 'Past and Present' and 'Coningsby' upon me has been to unsettle my opinions, if I ever had any on political subjects, and to show at the same time the necessity of forming some. Arnold would help me towards the formation, materially, if I could agree with him; but even while disagreeing I find a great deal which would assist any one. The problem of all others seems to be the connection of Church and State. If I could adopt Arnold's view, that Christianity was nothing more than a pure system of ethics, I should find no difficulty in assenting to his idea

[1] September 8, 1844.

that the Church and the State in a Christian country should be identical. I do not doubt that the State is concerned with more than the conservation of body and goods; that it has for its aim the overthrow of moral as well as physical evil; and then of course it follows that the State is concerned with the education of the people, and therefore in a Christian country with the Christian education of the people.

. . . . . .

"My idea of a great work on Politics is to consider first (by way of preface) what is the origin and object of government. Then to inquire into the duty of the State—first, to itself; secondly, to its neighbours; thirdly, to God. In the first place, we should have to consider whether any one form of government were prescribed by God; then what were the advantages and disadvantages of the several forms which have existed; then we should go into the various questions of police regulations, of political economy, colonisation, and many others; then the duty and mode of education, which would bring in the question of the Church. In the second part we should have international law. In the third part we have the obligation of a Christian State to acknowledge God in its public actions, to maintain His Church, and to spread abroad His Gospel. You will think my outline probably audacious."

This was a young man's theory of πολιτικὴ, written little more than a generation ago. While these large political and spiritual theories occupied Mr Northcote's leisure, his

office work had little of public interest. The brief letters between him and Mr Gladstone are concerned now with the price of potatoes and "foreign bestial," now touch on Mr Ward of Balliol, on surplices, and offertories. We read in one note "the Treasury has not yet answered about the cheeses;" and in the next paragraph, "I would be sorry to say what I believed to be even the sense given by the six doctors—to the Thirty-nine Articles." Many of Mr Gladstone's communications, too, are just what might be written by "any Minister to any secretary." Proof-sheets are to be sent to various addresses, reports are to be bound, papers are to be analysed, extracts are wanted, memoranda have to be hunted up, and the performances of Dr Pusey and Mr Ward are a good deal discussed in passing. On February 24, 1845, Mr Northcote announces to a correspondent that Mr Gladstone is no longer a member of the Government. He objected to the intended increase of the grant to Maynooth, and resigned.

In February 1846, the great discussion on free trade in corn was in progress. Sir Robert Peel had announced his intention to do many things that four years earlier he had seemed least likely to do. The famine in Ireland had not perhaps been alone in the work of his conversion. As Mr Browning put it, at Sorrento—

> "For 'tis in my England at home,
> Men meet gravely to-day,
> And debate if abolishing Corn-laws
> Be righteous and wise;
> If 'twere proper scirocco should vanish
> In black from the skies."

There could be no doubt as to Mr Northcote's opinion of the propriety of abolishing scirocco. In a letter of February 28, 1846, we find Mr Frederic Rogers (afterwards Lord Blachford) asking him to write some free-trade articles for the 'Guardian': "Two or three cogent, grave, well-informed, judicious, right-minded, and respectful free-trade articles."

On February 17, Mr Northcote had written to his father: "The monster debate is still going on. . . . Peel's speech seems to have been a very fine one, but the protectionists are by no means the better pleased for it. I hear that twelve of them, with Mr Miles at their head, are now canvassing Westminster for *General Evans!!* They could not go much beyond that."

In an undated letter of this period, explanatory of the state of affairs, he points out that "the evil in Ireland is that the great mass of the poor *never* have any money to lay out in buying food"—a sufficiently terrible evil. As to the *cause* of the potato-disease, he is content to leave that among the hidden counsels of heaven. We do not lack national sins: our "self-indulgence, love of money, forgetfulness of God," are not causes of potato-disease probably, but adequate causes of national misery.

A matter now arose in which Mr Northcote was to take great interest, and a very active part—the candidature of Mr Gladstone for the University of Oxford. It will be remembered that Mr Gladstone resigned his Newark seat in 1846, when he became Peel's Secretary for the Colonies, and was for the time without a seat in Parliament.

In July 1846, Mr Northcote was in communication with Mr Gladstone, to whom he was still acting as secretary, on this topic.

On January 23, 1847, an important letter from Mr Gladstone expresses his own views and wishes. To represent Oxford was his desire, as it had also been the dearest object of Mr Canning's ambition. The Liberal party has apparently determined that the representation of the universities is an injustice and a discredit. This was not the opinion of Mr Canning, nor of Mr Gladstone forty years ago. Mr Gladstone had already discerned that the welfare of the Church of England could not be secured by "a rigid unconditional assertion to the full of every civil and social privilege which she has inherited." Now a constituency like the University was likely to contain many voters of the stiffest kind on this subject. Mr Gladstone held that the pursuit of the Church was "spiritual work." Mr Gladstone's letters cannot be printed here, but any reader of them can perceive that his ideal Church was already much more of a spiritual institution than a mere branch of the Civil Service, and a community politically supreme in its sphere. He deprecates, as far as may be, the introduction of party spirit into religion. About his candidature, while there seemed a chance that Mr Estcourt, then one of the University members, would presently retire, Mr Northcote wrote, on February 11, 1847, to Mr Phillimore, afterwards Sir Robert Phillimore. He wrote from the Board of Trade, where he

was still engaged, and the letter appears, for some reason, never to have been sent. Mr Northcote alludes throughout to the letter of Mr Gladstone's (January 23, 1847) just mentioned, and his paper contains a clear statement of parties in the University, much as they were when Mr Gladstone's election actually took place.

In May 1847, at a meeting of some members of Convocation, Mr Gladstone's cause was supported. Mr Northcote threw himself into the contest with perhaps more eagerness than he ever showed in his own private cause. Mr Gladstone asked him to cease to sign himself "your obliged," "or what shall *I* write." His energy was not to be chilled by the coldness of his friend and brother-in-law, Mr Farrer.

This gentleman held that Mr Gladstone's book on Church and State was not very sagacious, that he did not show much wisdom in going out on the Maynooth Grant, "although his theory compelled him to give most unintelligible explanations of his practice."

The canvassing went on with more than the usual excitement in a university constituency. There was an electioneering Gladstonian rhyme worth remembering. The anti-Gladstonians had difficulty in finding a candidate—

> "A cipher's sought,
> A cipher's found:
> Its worth is naught,
> Its name is Round."

The question, as Mr Gladstone put it, was "whether political Oxford shall get shifted out of her palæozoic

position into one more suited to her position and work as they now stand." On August 2, Mr Gladstone writes that he heard, not without excitement, the horse's hoofs of the messenger bearing the news of the poll. He was elected by a majority of 173 over Mr Round; the senior member, Sir Robert Inglis, being some 700 votes in advance of him. His letter indicates the extent of his gratitude to those exertions of Mr Northcote which did so much for his success.

The election was important, but less important than that of 1852, of which a full account was prepared and printed by Mr Northcote. As early as December 21, Mr Northcote is writing to Mr Gladstone in considerable doubt as to the policy of that statesman's speech on the election of Baron Rothschild for the City of London, and on the disabilities of the Jews. So soon began signs of difference of opinion from the judgment to which, as he says, he has paid "habitual deference." And yet one of Mr Gladstone's letters to himself about "Jews and Turks" might have taught him to anticipate the speech.

Mr Northcote's time and labour had been devoted throughout the summer of 1847 not only to Mr Gladstone's election, but to official work, the reform, or rather abolition, of the Navigation Laws. On May 26, 1847, he writes to Mrs Northcote (Lady Iddesleigh), "I have just finished fytte the first of the Navigation Laws;" and this while he was writing a good deal on the Oxford election for the 'Guardian.' On June 23,

he thinks he has "finally completed the Navigation Law papers." The results of Mr Northcote's reflections on the Navigation Laws he published in a pamphlet, "A Short Review of the History of the Navigation Laws of England from the Earliest Times, to which is added a Note on the Present State of the Law. By a Barrister." (James Ridgway: Piccadilly, London, 1849.) This is a very lucid and interesting historical sketch in the interests of free trade. The course of our Navigation Laws is traced in three great periods—from the Act of Richard II. to the Act of Cromwell; next, from the Act of Cromwell to the recognition of American independence; last, from that date to the year 1849.

The general purpose of all Navigation Laws was to encourage our shipping, for reasons of protection no less than for reasons of trade, and, while doing this, to abet our commerce by restricting the privileges of other peoples. The Act of Richard II. enacted that no subject of the king should ship any merchandise, outward or homeward, in foreign bottoms. But this rule could not be maintained, and was mitigated in the very next year.

In the preamble of an Act of Edward VI., it was admitted that these attempts at restriction made wine and wood "to be daily sold dearer," while "the navy was thereby never the better maintained." Moreover, foreign countries retaliated, and at length Queen Elizabeth repealed the Act of Richard II., "by reason whereof there hath not only grown great displeasure

between the foreign princes and the kings of this realm, but also the merchants have been sorely aggrieved and endamaged."

Now this Elizabethan statement really contains the gist of the whole matter. As long as the Navigation Laws lasted, and Mr Northcote did much to secure their repeal, unpleasant History went on repeating herself. Under our old colonial system, the laws worked better, sometimes, circumstances aiding them. For political rather than commercial reasons, "to punish our rebellious colonies and clip the wings of the Dutch," Cromwell passed a stern Navigation Law and provoked a war. We kept the carrying trade with the colonies from the Dutch, at the expense of the plantations. Ireland and Scotland even were excluded from a trade jealously reserved to England and Wales. Naturally the colonies grumbled, in 1671, through the lips of Sir William Berkeley, governor of Virginia. The laws were *not* for the good of his Majesty's service, or the good of the subject—"On my soul, it is the contrary for both." Minor modifications were gradually introduced, but the law remained very strict, "supported by an extensive and self-supplying colonial empire, and securing a monopoly under the most favourable circumstances." But the United States broke from us, and circumstances wholly ceased to be favourable. Our "infinite variety of paper chains," as Mr Burke described it, was rent asunder. We struggled on with new restrictive devices, irritating the Americans, and damaging the West Indies. In 1794 inade-

quate concessions were made. In 1817 and 1820, the United States passed retaliatory Acts, and we were busy with that dispute till 1830. Changes in the relations between Portugal, Spain, and their colonies caused our laws to favour the competition of foreigners with our own colonists. "When the Spanish and Portuguese colonial systems broke up, ours was no longer tenable." "By the fall of the old systems, a prop was withdrawn from our Navigation Laws; we could no longer regard the retaliation of foreign Powers with indifference, nor afford to cripple our trade by keeping up the restrictions which we had previously maintained at the expense of our colonies." The old objections, felt from the time of Richard II. to that of Elizabeth, revived, now that the colonial empire had broken down. Prussia threatened retaliation. We adopted a system of protection and of "reciprocity treaties," and here Mr Northcote distinguished between false and true reciprocity. "Reciprocity is a complicated delusion," he says. "Reciprocity, such as we desire, is a vision which cannot be grasped; reciprocity, such as we can get, is no real reciprocity, but a mischievous counterfeit." He argued against the shipowners, who, with one sole exception, were for restriction, that they were discouraging commerce in the interests of shipping—a sufficiently manifest fallacy. He then stated the reasons which made a relaxation, or rather a repeal of the Navigation Laws, desirable.

1. The great alteration made in our colonial system by the abandonment of protective duties.

2. The approaching termination of our treaties of navigation, and the attitude of foreign States.

3. The anomalous position of our law, in consequence of the Austrian treaty of 1838.

4. The increase of annoyance which the restrictions of the law cause to our largely increasing trade, and to our manufacturing enterprise.

The first objection was the gravest, so many disadvantages did it entail on our colonies. We impeded their exports, and crippled their imports. The constant risk of foreign retaliation was also very serious. As to our maritime supremacy, it depends on our commercial marine; but that, in turn, hangs on "an extended commerce and a flourishing colonial empire. *Laws which are bad for colonies and commerce can never be really good for shipping.*"

That sums up the whole matter. Time has apparently justified the arguments of Mr Northcote. "Our success," says Sir Thomas Farrer, "has taken place since we repealed our Navigation Laws, and deprived our shipowners of every privilege, whilst we have given them free access to every market for their materials." Over American competition, so highly conceived by De Tocqueville in 1835, we have triumphed, because, "whilst we leave our shipowner to buy his materials and build and buy his ships where and how he pleases, America refuses to place a foreign-built ship upon her register, and imposes a duty of 40 per cent on the materials of shipbuilding."[1] No con-

[1] Free Trade *versus* Fair Trade. Cassells: London, 1887. Pp. 229, 230.

tention can seem more victorious, more justified by consequences. Yet the Americans are not blind to their own interests, and they differ from these ideas. It is not for amateurs to dabble in this controversy. Suffice it to say, that Mr Northcote's work on the subject of the Navigation Laws was ardent. The results were lucidly stated, and the statement had its influence in bringing about the measure which he desired. This piece of work, too, made him conspicuous for the first time, and was of great influence on his career. In writing to a lady who had asked him for a copy of his pamphlet, Mr Northcote described his own political attitude, especially as to free trade:—

"I think I understood Henrietta at the same time to say that you were one of the many who express regret at my having turned, or being about to turn, Whig; and as that is a turn which I devoutly hope I never may take, I cannot resist the temptation of saying a few words of indignant denial. A *free-trader* I have always been since I could form any opinion of my own on the subject; and I advocated the repeal of the Corn Laws,—that is to say, the principle of free trade in corn,—*before* Sir Robert Peel announced his change of sentiment, and, I should also add, *before* Lord John Russell had abandoned his fixed duty. But as regards the characteristic principles of the Whigs (of which free trade is not one) I am as zealously opposed to them now as I ever was, and perhaps more so since I have seen the course of the present

Ministry. Personally I have every reason to like them, and I am also convinced that some of them sometimes act upon what they hold to be true principles; but taking them as a body, I look on them as a very miserable set of statesmen, with no views but such as are suggested by the moment, and thinking the great safety of the country to consist in the maintenance of a Whig Cabinet. We Tories, who are now but few in number, are in the habit of saying that government should not be by the people, but for the people; I think the Whigs reverse the sentiment, and consider it should be by the people and for themselves.

"As I say I am a free-trader, I must warn you not to confound me with the Manchester school, whom I utterly abjure and detest. The only thing that keeps me from being a Peelite is my lurking fear lest Peel and the Manchester school should some day coalesce. However, upon the whole I am more of a Peelite than anything else. As for the Protectionists, I sympathise with them on many points, but . . . [here follows a curious expression of sentiment, which was to be reversed.] I am angry with them for keeping up the feud with Peel; and I think their recent language about the Queen and the House of Lords proves that the loyalty of many of them is only lip-deep, and that they think more of their own rents and of their hatred to Peel than of the Monarchy or the Constitution. So you see here I am in search of a party, and not very hopeful of being able to find one. I should be willing enough to come into Parliament as a supporter of a Peelite Ministry should one be formed, especially if it had an

infusion of Protectionists. A Peelite Ministry with an infusion of Whigs would embarrass me much. One or other of these will, I suppose, be the next combination."

The troublesome times of 1848 do not seem to have caused Mr Northcote much apprehension, nor greatly to have ruffled his habitual peace of mind. The famous meeting of the Chartists, in April, is just referred to in the following letter to his grandfather:—

"B. OF TRADE, *April* 11, 1848.

"MY DEAR G.-P.,—We look less like a garrison to-day, and all our *chevaux-de-frise* are removed, and our muskets and bayonets taken away. I have no doubt the preparations which were made had a great effect in preventing mischief; and that it was better to err on the side of over-caution. Nothing like a breach of the peace occurred anywhere but at Blackfriars Bridge, where there were a few broken heads. I trust we may now look for peace and quiet in London. Would we could say the same of Dublin! I think the accounts from Ireland very bad, and that we have little chance of escaping an outbreak.

"Yesterday was an idle day, and I am making up leeway, so no more at present from your affte. G.-son,

"S. H. N.

"All well at home?"[1]

[1] "The Treasury and Privy Council office buildings, then occupied in part by the Board of Trade, were fortified by the Engineer officers of the Board, and the windows blocked with Blue-books. The chief action of the

Meantime his father, down in Devonshire, was writing to him to say that the display of luxury, in contrast with the vast poverty, made him "almost a Radical." In this month Mr Northcote received his commission in the yeomanry, of which he was for many years an energetic member, though perhaps he did not take the same fiery interest in martial affairs as was exhibited by Sir Walter Scott, when he, too, was a yeomanry officer. He brought in a contingent of ten fine young men, "not likely to prove Chartists." Perhaps not the least result of his military experience, *non sine gloria*, was the famous tale of the yeomanry leader and the fixed point. One of the men, who was leading a small force across country, was observed not to take a very straight course. "Why don't you keep your eye on a given point?" said his officer. "So I do, sir." "And what point?" "That old cow, sir," replied the man. The old cow, of course, was a point, but not precisely fixed. Mr Northcote was wont to use the anecdote as an apologue, when people complained that political leaders "did not go straight." The "point" in politics is no more "fixed" than the old cow, and, indeed, for long has more closely resembled that fabulous French animal, *la vâche enragée*.

At this time, as Mrs Northcote remarked, "every stray bit of work was apt to attach itself to him," which, as she adds, "made him happy." Questions of sugar bounties

Engineers, however, was to make the clerks, who, in consequence of a somewhat excited letter of Sir C. Trevelyan's, had brought with them a dangerous armoury of miscellaneous firearms, surrender their weapons, and to lock them up till the day was over."—T. H. F.

and of the Madeira chaplaincy, of the Royal Academy and the Art Unions, of a testimonial to his old tutor, Mr Coleridge, are among the details of the business of the year, at the end of which began the serious, and, in the end, the fatal illness of Mr Northcote, senior.

One of the most troublesome of the many pieces of work which attached themselves to Stafford Northcote now claimed his attention. Prince Albert had already conceived the idea of the Great Exhibition, the "palace made of windies" which Thackeray sang, now in humorous and now in serious verse. "The great show was the outcome and festival of the great peace, and of the cosmopolitan wave which followed on the French war. Like Carlyle's married couple, who burnt their bed in the marriage feast, people made a prophecy of what was a funeral pile."

The vast expectation of universal peace and prosperity founded on this huge show and fair was, of course, certain to be disappointed. The world may be "governed with little wisdom," and human nature may be pleased with a feather and tickled with a straw, but these entertainments do little to affect the evolution of humanity. There is no evidence that Mr Northcote took a sentimental or poetical interest in the affair which he conducted, as far as his considerable part was concerned, with tact, and with even self-sacrificing energy. He had, indeed, very much to do with the success of the scheme. His skill in organising, his energetic presence in a chaos of goods and packing-cases and a babel of tongues, were valuable, not

less valuable than his conciliatory temper among opposing interests, and in presence of methods distasteful to the old official mind. These pushing methods were tempered by his sweet and conciliatory manners.

It was on June 30, 1849, that Prince Albert called a meeting of the Society of Arts at Buckingham Palace, and explained his ideas. The history of Mr Northcote's connection with the Great Exhibition may be lightly sketched from his correspondence. On January 3, 1850, Prince Albert requested him to meet him at Windsor. Mr Northcote was appointed one of the secretaries to the Commission, and in this recognition of his merit and industry, he observed with pleasure the influence of Mr Gladstone. But Mr Gladstone (January 10, 1850) declines to recognise himself as the source of his friend's promotion. "You have made your own reputation with the members of the Government," says the statesman, and he believes that this repute is not due to connection with himself. Mr Northcote was appreciated by Lord Taunton, Lord Granville, and the Whigs, and was by them suggested as an adviser whom the Prince could thoroughly trust.

There was at that time a good deal of difference of opinion about the Exhibition. There were opponents who objected simply because the proposal came from Prince Albert. Others disliked the use of Hyde Park, and suggested the Isle of Dogs as a suitable and convenient site for the display. All through 1850, Mr Northcote, as secretary of the Commission and deputy attending, was

occupied with every detail of the business, and had frequently to meet Prince Albert. In February, he contemplated the idea of retiring from his post, conceiving himself to be more needed by his family concerns, on the illness of his father, and by his position in Devonshire. On this whole topic, he wrote to Mr Farrer the following important letter:—

"PYNES, *February* 13, 1850.

"MY DEAR T. H.,—I do not know that I have any right to trouble you with this letter, still less to ask for an answer to it. I am writing partly with a view to clearing my own mind upon a perplexing subject, as well as for the sake of the advice of a better judgment than my own in a matter of much importance to me.

"It is quite impossible to say how long my father may yet be spared to us; but it is clear that it cannot be very long, and it is clear also that I must now remain here till the end. What is doubtful is, whether I ought or ought not to make arrangements for giving up my official position, and living here permanently; and this is a question which I should answer to myself quickly, because if I answer in the negative, I ought to consult my father upon the arrangement which should be made. In the conversations I have had with him I have spoken of coming here to live altogether, and he is, I think, pleased with this as the most satisfactory arrangement; but I have not yet fully made up my mind, though I have nearly done so, and for these reasons.

"1. I do not see very clearly what could be done here if I did not come to live here. Sir Stafford is just so far removed from dotage as to make him unwilling to give up all idea of his being able to manage the property. At the same time he is really quite unable, and it will in fact be managed by the person, whoever he may be, who lives with him. I do not think it would do to let my uncle manage for part of the year, and to attempt to manage myself during another part; indeed my ignorance, which would thus be stereotyped, would be a sufficient objection to that. The only course would be to allow my uncle and his family to come and live here permanently, and to come myself as a visitor only. But I cannot make up my mind to this. It would be cutting myself off from all real connection with the place.

"2. Besides, I shall in a few years have the undivided responsibility of looking after this place, and I have given so very little attention to country matters, that I am sure I ought to lose no time in studying them, and preparing myself.

"These are my two main reasons, which are quite strong enough to act upon if there be no objections that outweigh them. The obvious objection which everybody takes is, that I ought not to give up a profession in which I am making some progress; and I cannot conceal from myself that I am in a position which ought not lightly to be abandoned. I have no knowledge on the point, but I have some reason for thinking it probable that in a year or so I should succeed to some such rank as Sir

Denis holds, and my connection with both parties is such as to render me tolerably independent of ministerial changes, as I do not owe it to party favour. Then, again, I have some aptitude for official business, and I am afraid I have very little for country pursuits. Also I am rather afraid of falling back into indolent habits if removed from the excitement of office. Neither do I like the idea of losing sight of my London friends, who are as iron sharpening iron, which I fear will not be the case with people here.

"I see I am falling into the forms of pleading, so now for the replication. I think that, on the whole, if I must absolutely choose between the two, the life of a country gentleman is better than the life of an official. I do not abound in ideas, but I see many things which I think I could do in the country, and which perhaps another would not do, whereas I see nothing that I could do in official life which will not be just as well done by others. Without being Utopian I think I may reasonably expect that if I live here among the farmers and the poor, and pay attention to their ways and wants, I may do something towards improving their intelligence, or raising their standard of comfort, which an agent or a steward would certainly not do; whereas I do not believe that one useful measure of Government will suffer in the smallest degree by my place being taken by another. Any man of equal qualification could do all that I could in the Board of Trade; but no man of howsoever superior qualifications could do what my

position would enable me to do here. Therefore, although I believe (to speak highly of myself) that I am spoiling a good red-tapist and converting him into a very indifferent country gentleman, yet I think I am doing the republic a service by turning such advantages as I possess to account in the quarter where aid is most wanted. The welfare of the country does not depend on Parliament alone, or even chiefly, though that is where the show is made.

"Besides, I do not see that after all I am doing an unwise thing for my own advancement even in a parliamentary sense. If, in a few years' time, I have made myself master of my duties here, and established my position in the country, and learnt practically something of the wants of my own class and of my neighbours, I think I should come into Parliament naturally and with much more strength than if I were a mere official adventurer. At present I doubt much if Exeter would accept me, so that if I came in at all, it would be for some place to which I was a stranger, and must be on the strength of testimonials from somebody or other, which is not pleasant. If I live here two years, it will be my own fault if I do not command a seat on the first vacancy. That sounds arrogant, does it not? Perhaps it is rather too strong, but I have some faith in myself.

"Lastly, now that I have had seven or eight years of official life, I begin to think a little time for reading and reflection would be useful, though I see so much to be done here that I doubt whether I shall read or re-

flect more than heretofore. But I have been looking at official business too close, and shall correct my judgment a little by learning to look at it from a distance, when perhaps I shall think differently of some of its proportions.

"Well, I have answered one of my objects by thus getting my views into shape. I am not actually committed to anything, but I can hardly say I have not made up my mind. If you have patience to read so far, and further patience to tell me whether I am right, or whether I am deceiving myself, I shall be very much obliged. Only let me add, I am not in the least influenced by any sense of weariness of official life; on the contrary, it is daily becoming more pleasant to me, and were the question simply one of preference, I cannot tell which life I should prefer.—Ever your very affte.,

"STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE."

A few days after this letter was written, the elder Mr Northcote died (February 22, 1850), and his death was followed by that of his father, Sir Stafford (March 17, 1851), on which the best known Sir Stafford succeeded to the property and title.

Against this withdrawal Mr Farrer advised him strongly, urging that few could do his official work so well as himself. Sir Denis Le Marchant wrote to him (February 13, 1850): "Labouchere and Lord Granville tell me that the Prince cannot bear the idea of your going. He will, I believe, adopt any arrangement to secure even your

occasional assistance." Colonel Grey wrote to say that the Prince, while he grieved sincerely for Mr Northcote's bereavement, considered that his withdrawal would be most injurious to the Exhibition. Mr Labouchere wrote in the same spirit of kindness and appreciation. Mr Northcote returned to work, and by May 23 was being supplied with materials for arranging the French and Belgian part of the Exhibition. One or two letters to Mrs. Northcote (Lady Iddesleigh) speak of the death of Sir Robert Peel, of the prospects of the Exhibition, of his own, and his own too happy character, and of the sort of times Mr Gladstone expects.

"Board of Trade, *April* 25, 1850.

"I saw Gladstone yesterday, and had a good deal of talk with him. He thought I ought not abruptly to give up my place, but gradually to draw off, and only to take such work as was the continuation of what I had been committed to, and which could be done in the country. He was out of spirits himself about public matters, and did not paint parliamentary life in rose colour, but thought my position would perhaps be less embarrassing than his own in the sort of times he expects.

"He is distressed at the position Peel has taken up, and at the want of sympathy between those who for so many years acted cordially together; and he looks forward to serious Church troubles, which, he thinks, might possibly drive him out of Parliament."

"BOARD OF TRADE, *July* 2, 1850.

"What a sad thing this accident of poor Peel's is! There seems every ground to fear the worst, though I have just heard a rather improved account again. The symptoms this morning were very unfavourable, and I believe there have been convulsions, which are highly alarming in such a case. This is the third and critical day, and you will probably learn something decisive from the latest bulletins in the 'Globe.' It is quite a sight to see the throng of inquirers.

"Of course there are all sorts of conjectures as to the effect which his removal will have upon the state of things in Parliament and the country, and the general feeling is what a great loss he will be, though perhaps that admits of question in some respects."

"B. OF TRADE, *July* 3, 1850.

"I return Thomas Henry's letter, which is a very nice one. I wish the one thing wanting could be supplied, even though I cannot say I would supply it exactly as he wishes. As to what he says of living more in the present and less in the future and the past, I do most heartily agree, and I cannot help thinking that the faculty of doing so makes up to us commonplace souls for the want of the true fire: and yet is it not rather a degrading thing too? ought we not to be exercising man's peculiar property of looking forwards and backwards,

instead of being content with the present? I am beginning to lament over myself rather in the opposite sense, and to be disgusted because when I am at Pynes I really care for nothing but Pynes, and when I am in London I care for nothing but London. It seems base to be so easily happy, when one might so easily be unhappy, in one's work. I should not care if my happiness proceeded from any sound view of the fitness of things; but I am afraid it is the fruit of simple indolence, and that I should be just as contented if I were set to grind coffee or make up prescriptions, as when I am farming or officialising. However, there is one drawback to being happy here, which is, that I have not got you and my pretty little men to talk to. You will see my handiwork in the 'Chronicle,' not in the leading article but in the paper which it is upon. The names at the end are a blunder. As for the 'Times,' it is perfectly disgusting.

"So the worst has come of poor Peel's accident. There did not seem much hope all yesterday, indeed it was evident to all who had seen him the few days before, that he was not in a state to bear such a shock. I parted from him at three o'clock that Saturday, just two hours before the accident, and was to have been with him again early on Monday morning. He was looking thoroughly jaded and ill; but they say Lady Peel remarked upon his high spirits, which certainly did not strike me. He must have had great suffering.

"I am going to the *levée* to-day, and have some letters

to write before I start; so with best love to all, I remain your most devoted and affectionate."

Some private letters to Lady Northcote of 1851 may here find their places—narratives of social events and pleasures long forgotten. The note of 1851 seems to show that it was not Lord Derby who first made a humorous application (to Mr Disraeli) of the story of Benjamin's mess. The second note deals with the squabbles and jealousies of foreign and English exhibitors.

"UNIVERSITY CLUB, *June* 7, 1851.

"Thos. Henry and I went to see Rachel last night, in a very stupid play—'Polyeucte.' I admired her as much as ever, though the part was not exactly the one for her, being a case of duty triumphant over feeling; whereas she decidedly shines in feeling triumphant over duty. The Merivales were sitting next us, and he was rich on the subject of religious liberty, which is decidedly infringed by the hero of the piece; and was drawing parallels between Lord Torrington and the Governor of Armenia, to our great edification. He said Lord Torrington was in the lobby of the House of Commons the other day and overheard a member saying to another, what a mess Lord Torrington had got into. 'Ah,' says the other, 'I think it's Ben Hawes who has got him into it, because Benjamin's mess is five times as great as anybody else's.'"

"EXHIBITION BUILDINGS, *June* 27, 1851.

"There is some very unfair play on the part of the French, and unless they are ridden with a sharp curb, they will do a great deal of mischief. The English are much too shamefaced to deal with them. In one class in which it is acknowledged that the English are superior, the French jurors contrived to induce the English to agree that there was nothing on the English side deserving a great medal—which they did of course, with the understanding that nothing at all in the class would be proposed for the great medal. No sooner were they committed to this admission than the French brought forward a list of *twenty-five* objects, for all of which they claimed the great medal; and though, of course, the immense majority of them were rejected, the English did not like to refuse every one of so large a list, and so five were carried."

His place at the Board of Trade Mr Northcote resigned in August 1850, to the great regret of his chiefs—Mr Labouchere and Sir Denis Le Marchant.

The correspondence of 1851 is meagre. On December of that year Mr Gladstone is "sadly and sorely grieved to hear about your health." The work of the Exhibition, in fact, had told on Mr Northcote's weak point, or perhaps had caused the weakness. His heart was slightly affected, and he was ordered to be idle by his doctors. This was the beginning of the end that was still more than thirty

years distant. We all carry about our death with us: the work of 1851 showed him where *his* enemy lay. He had already been appointed, on October 17, a Companion of the Order of the Bath—for honour and trouble came crowding in this busy and distracted year.

To be done with the Exhibition, it may suffice to say that Prince Albert warmly approved of Sir Stafford Northcote's concluding report and summary.

CHAPTER IV.

BEGINNING OF HIS PARLIAMENTARY CAREER.

CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT—AVERSION TO THE WHIGS—ELECTION ADDRESS AT EXETER—MR GLADSTONE'S OXFORD SEAT—POLITICAL IDEAS—CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION—LEARNING ELOCUTION FROM MR WIGAN—THE CRIMEAN WAR—CANDIDATURE AT DUDLEY—ENTERS PARLIAMENT—MR DISRAELI—MAIDEN SPEECH—THE SUNDAY MOBS—FAMILIAR LETTERS—LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ONE of the last letters which Sir Stafford Northcote received in 1851 was a short note from Lord Granville, humorously announcing his own appointment to the Foreign Office. Lord John Russell had evicted Lord Palmerston, whose sympathy with the *coup d'état* in France was to the taste neither of the country nor of the Court. In less than two months—in February 1852—Lord Palmerston had his tit for tat, as he said, and "turned out John Russell" on the Militia Bill. Lord Derby came in with a weak and tolerated Ministry—"care-takers," as they are now called—and with a mild hankering after Protection. This was checkmated by the renewed activity of the old Free Trade League, and

by the general conviction. Mr Disraeli was Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was a dissolution in July. There was general uneasiness about the intentions of the ruler of France, and the Volunteer movement began.

In the early part of a year which witnessed his first advances to a parliamentary constituency, Sir Stafford Northcote's health was still suffering from the effects of work at the Exhibition. Writing to him in February, and looking forward to a dissolution, Mr Gladstone speaks somewhat anxiously about his health. Should there be a contest at Oxford, Mr Gladstone says that his own seat there "would be ill purchased by your casting-vote, were you, by going up to give it, to diminish by a hair's-breadth the likelihood of your full recovery." Sir Stafford's own political position at this uneasy time, when no Government had the real confidence of the country, is sketched in an earlier letter to Lady Northcote (April 19, 1851): "I am clearly making up my mind to a position a good way towards the Protectionist side. Things are going on so that I would waive a great many objections, and accept a great many measures that I do not think politic, in order to get the Whigs out and a Stanley Ministry in — though perhaps the mischief one most dreads is actually done." The Whigs were anxious to have his support, but he distrusted them as a party. A critic remarks, and it is my own opinion, that it was mainly questions of the Church and religion which kept him in the Conservative camp from the first.

In February 1852, the Whig Ministry *was* out, and the

Derby Ministry in, but not in vigorous condition. Protection was out of the question. As Sir Stafford wrote to Mr Gladstone, August 3, 1852, "Protection begins at home, —on the Treasury bench." In April, Mr Gladstone had requested Sir Stafford to be named as one of his executors in his will, in place of Mr James Hope Scott, whose name he removed when Mr Hope Scott entered the Church of Rome. This is worth mentioning, as an illustration of the close private as well as political confidence and friendship then uniting two men whom circumstances were to sever. Even in this letter Mr Gladstone foresees so many changes and chances, that, though well pleased on a short view of affairs, he cannot but feel it a duty to avoid long views, and shun speculations. On May 4, Lord Granville wrote to Sir Stafford: "Lord John and I are restrained from venturing on the forlorn-hope of getting you as Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, by the account Farrer gives of the villanous tyranny of your doctor. Your Address has made me fear that we are not, at all events for the present, likely to be joined on the same side in political warfare; but I hope that you will always allow me to reckon yourself as one of my most sincere private friends."

The Address referred to was issued in answer to a request to stand as Conservative candidate for the city of Exeter, which was, however, ultimately declined.

This document, printed here, contains a brief and clear exposition of Sir Stafford Northcote's attitude at the beginning of his attempts to enter on his political career.

"GENTLEMEN,—Having received a requisition, respectably and numerously signed, to allow myself to be put in nomination as a Conservative candidate for the city of Exeter at the approaching election, I hasten to return you my sincere thanks for the honour you have done me, and to assure you of my entire willingness to respond to your appeal.

"I come before you on this occasion not as an entire stranger, and I trust that it is unnecessary for me to detain you with a lengthened profession of those Conservative principles which my family has always upheld, and to which I cordially adhere. If an ardent loyalty to the Monarchy, a no less ardent love of that constitutional liberty which has long been the peculiar boast of Englishmen, and a firm, undivided, and deeply rooted attachment to the Church of England be qualifications for your confidence, I fearlessly claim it at your hands. A Conservative Administration is now in power; it needs the support of all who are opposed to the headlong progress of democracy, and I for one am fully convinced that upon the result of the approaching appeal to the country the fate of many of our most honoured institutions greatly depends.

"While, however, I profess myself to be on general grounds a warm supporter of Lord Derby's Government, I feel it necessary to reserve my judgment upon one question with respect to which the course which his lordship may take is still doubtful. I have a strong individual opinion that the long-agitated question of Agricultural

Protection is upon the eve of a final settlement. It is my full expectation that Lord Derby will perceive that the reimposition of a duty on corn is no longer possible, and that whether he may or may not bring forward any scheme for the relief of the agricultural portion of the community, he will not attempt to revive protecting imports. Should I be unfortunately mistaken in this respect, and should a reactionary measure be introduced, it would be impossible for me to support it, though even in that case I should be unwilling to withdraw my general confidence from a Conservative Government; for I am one of those who have long lamented that differences upon commercial policy should divide those who ought to be united in the firm support of peace, order, and good government at home, and the maintenance of friendly relations with the old allies of the British nation abroad.

"Before I conclude, I ought perhaps to touch upon another subject, which I know to be one in which many of the electors of Exeter take a great interest,—I mean the policy to be pursued towards our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. No special question is now under discussion in connection with this point, nor am I aware that any such is likely to be raised; I can therefore only state the general tenor of my opinions. Every day's experience more fully satisfies me of the greatness of the blessing we enjoy in our Reformed Protestant Church. While I am earnestly desirous to secure to every denomination of Christians the same religious liberty which I claim for the body to which I myself belong, I consider

it my duty to oppose all pretensions inconsistent with the welfare of the Church of England. I have viewed with regret the spirit in which the Roman Catholics have responded to the liberal policy which has so long been pursued towards them, and the recollection of the events of the last two years will materially weigh with me in the consideration of any measure on which I may have to pronounce a judgment. I cannot, however, go the length to which some are prepared to proceed, of proposing a reversal of the policy to which I have alluded."

In the summer of 1852, and in January 1853, Sir Stafford was much occupied with the business of Mr Gladstone's Oxford election. A pamphlet published by Sir Stafford, in 1853, contains the gist of the matter.[1]

When the dissolution of 1852 approached, the opponents of Mr Gladstone conceived that his friends might have been alienated by his votes on Jewish Disabilities and the Papal Aggression.[2] Mr Gladstone's opponents therefore determined to enter a third candidate, and to this resolution they adhered, in spite of a declaration signed by 1276 electors. Dr Marsham, of Merton, was their man, and, though his resident supporters would have withdrawn him, the non-resident insisted on the trouble and expense of a poll. Mr Gladstone's majority was 350.

[1] A Statement of Facts connected with the Election of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, &c. · Oxford: Parker, 1853.

[2] That famed "aggression" is the biographer's first memory of politics, and he recalls his early lack of enthusiasm for going to the stake as a Protestant martyr.

In the debate of November, Mr Gladstone attacked Mr Disraeli's Budget; the Government was defeated, and in January the Tories again contested Mr Gladstone's Oxford seat. The election was a curious affair of obscure intrigues; Lord Compton being proposed, apparently without his knowledge, or against his will, Mr Perceval was suddenly put forward. Mr Gladstone had a majority of 87 on a small poll. These intrigues gave Sir Stafford plenty of trouble, and are nearly as mysterious as the Gowrie Conspiracy. The activity of a Dr Lemprière added a kind of mythical interest.

Mr Gladstone entered the new Government, a sort of Coalition Government, as Chancellor of the Exchequer. On December 1852, Sir Stafford wrote to him thus, with reference to the proposal that he should serve on a Commission for reorganising the Board of Trade: "I am rather a stiff Conservative, and do not feel at all sure that the next Administration will be one that I can work under, though if you form a leading element in it I can scarcely imagine my having any doubts." And, two days later, he adds, "I am free of the doctors, and shall have no difficulty on that score." He does not want a salary for his services to the Commission, "only not to drop out of sight." His political and personal hopes and fears, at this moment, are contained in the following letter to Lady Northcote (December 23):—

"THE ATHENÆUM, *Dec.* 23, 1852.

"There has been a great deal of difficulty and a great

deal of delay in the adjustment of the Cabinet, and I believe some very curious proceedings have taken place; but it is now understood that the arrangements are really satisfactory, and will shortly be announced. I am nearly sure that Lord Palmerston has come in,—a step of the highest importance. I confess I am painfully anxious as to the result, for I have had a long and desperate argument with Gladstone, which has not altogether satisfied me that I could accept an office even if one were offered me, and I have once or twice been on the point of making up my mind to request him not to give me the chance, as it would be painful to have to refuse. But I am now inclined to wait till the list is actually out, and to see whether it would be possible to join them without sacrificing my Conservative character. I cannot get over my prejudice against Lord John Russell, nor my strong aversion to entering the House of Commons under his leadership. If we are to be at liberty to treat him as a convert, and a comparatively insignificant member of a Conservative Cabinet, it may do; but I cannot put up with less than this. It is a comfort to see that the Radical papers are taking this line, and beginning to abuse him accordingly. Lord Palmerston's junction, too, gives the whole affair a different complexion. Instead of a mixed Government of Peelites and Russellites, it may be a Peelite Government supported by the moderate Whigs of all shades and classes."

A few days later he says, "It does one good to be

brought into contact with Gladstone now and then." On February 12, 1853, Mr Gladstone wrote to him, quoting the proverb of "the willing horse," and asking him to aid in the revision of packet contracts. To this work he set himself, and writes in February to Lady Northcote, from the Board of Trade, saying that he "dreams pathetically of the Warren Hill, and of lots of cock-pheasants running about on it."

All this spring there were coquettings with constituencies at Totnes, Taunton, and Exeter, which came to no definite result, nor is it worth while to dally over the local politics of many years ago. Sir Stafford's absence from Pynes, at his official business in London, was reckoned against his chances of success. He was busy with many matters—for example, with a report for the Prince Consort on the Department of Science and Art. Mr Labouchere offered him the secretaryship of a Commission to inquire into the affairs of the City of London. He was occupied with the business of the Volunteers at Exeter, and, objecting to sing at the Yeomanry mess at Sidmouth, he added to the hilarity of the evening by telling "the historical story." This was a mixed burlesque of history in verse, with choruses in various tunes. He entertained 2000 people of Exeter in July, at a *fête* in the grounds of Pynes. On October 15, he withdrew from the English Churchman's Union, conceiving that it was no affair of theirs to censure the orthodoxy of the Primate.

Business of an important and permanent kind was not lacking. In company with Sir Charles Trevelyan, Sir

Stafford Northcote had been invited to draw up a report on the organisation of the permanent Civil Service. The deficiencies of that Service — above all, the imperfect method of conferring appointments—were at that time notorious, and they are clearly summed up in the extremely lucid report. In place of drawing into its ranks the best possible young men, the Civil Service was a kind of refuge for the helpless. "Admission into the Civil Service is, indeed, eagerly sought for; but it is for the unambitious and the indolent and incapable that it is chiefly desired. Those whose abilities do not warrant an expectation that they will succeed in the open professions, . . . and those whom indolence of temperament or physical infirmities unfit for active exertions, are placed in the Civil Service, where they may obtain an honourable livelihood with little labour and no risk." How appointments were conferred, and what manner of life the officials led, may be gathered with ease and diversion, if not with serious accuracy, from the amusing 'Memoirs' of Mr Edmund Yates, and from Mr Anthony Trollope's novel, 'The Three Clerks.' The report avers that the country had to pay salaries of men absent on pleas of ill-health, and pensions to others whose health would never have allowed them to pass a medical examination. Within the Service there was not enough competition to encourage industry, and *trop de zèle* was the last danger to be apprehended. "The feeling of security which this state of things necessarily engenders tends to encourage indolence, and thereby to depress the

character of the Service." The possessors of patronage in each case "will probably bestow the office upon the son or dependant of some one having personal and political claims upon him"—a condition of things which was soon after found impossible by William Guppy, in 'Bleak House.' "While no pains have been taken in the first instance to secure a good man for the office, nothing is done, after the clerk's appointment, to turn his abilities, whatever they may be, to the best account." Thus for the higher appointments it often became necessary to seek a competent person outside of the office, and "this is necessarily discouraging to Civil servants,"—indeed this kind of discouragement is by no means quite abolished. The Service, with its 16,000 salaried officials, was, moreover, "fragmentary" and disjointed.

The question as to the remedies was settled thus, in the report of Sir Charles Trevelyan and Sir Stafford Northcote, and, practically, their conclusions were accepted in later legislation. They decided that it was better to catch officials young, so to speak, and train them for their duties. They should be made "constantly to feel that their promotion and future prospects depend entirely on the industry and ability with which they discharge their duties." The first step should be "the establishment of a proper system of examination before appointment;" and this was the beginning of the present vast organisation of examiners and examinees. To that system, as to all mortal institutions, the objections are gross and palpable; but it is not possible, perhaps, to suggest any better sys-

tem. Examinations are not the end and aim of education (as many appear to hold), but at least they test a man's disposition to work and take pains. This immense advantage, on the whole, they possess over the old system of patronage. Previously, while examinations were not by any means unknown, they had been of a private, therefore of a lax and slovenly description, more or less like Charles Perrault's perfunctory examination, in the dead of night, before the Faculty of Law at Orleans, or that Oxford inquiry into historical knowledge, which put one question, "Who founded the University?" and was content with the erroneous reply, "King Alfred." When heads of offices or principal clerks tested young men in whose success "they took a lively interest," the conclusion was foregone. The report recommended, therefore, a Central Board of Examiners, "composed of men holding an independent position, and capable of commanding general confidence." "We are of opinion that this examination should be, in all cases, a competing literary examination," with proper inquiry into physical and moral qualifications. "We see no other mode by which (in the case of inferior no less than superior offices) the double object can be attained of selecting the fittest person, and of avoiding the evils of patronage." Nor has the wisdom of posterity found any other solution. "It is only by throwing the examinations entirely open that we can hope to attract the proper class of candidates." Proficiency in "history, jurisprudence, political economy, modern languages, political and physical

geography, besides the staple of classics and mathematics, should be made directly conducive to the success of young men desirous of entering into the public service."

These were, on the whole, and omitting some practical details, the recommendations which Sir Stafford Northcote helped to urge on the country and the Government. The results were the well-known changes in the making of appointments to, and in the organisation of, the Civil Service. It cannot be said that reform was uncalled for, as we learn from the report that, in the opinion of an eminent official, only four young men had, in many years, been introduced into his own office "on the ground of well-ascertained fitness."

While Sir Stafford Northcote was engaged on the difficult and complicated inquiry about the Civil Service, its needs, its remedies, and in studying the ideas of specialists in official work and in education, he did not neglect practical training for the political career. He took lessons in elocution from Mr Wigan, the actor, and he writes thus to Lady Northcote (December 8, 1853):—

"I had a grand set-to last night. Wigan said he should like to hear me repeat some speech of my own. I said I could not do that, but that I would make him a harangue on the state of the Civil Service if he liked; so I began, and, both to his and my own amazement, spoke for an hour and forty minutes. He is to give me his criticisms when I next go to him, which will be on Saturday morning. I suspect I displayed more of my faults in this way than in reading or speaking Shakespeare and Curran; but

he said I ought to make a good speaker, for that my voice had shown not the slightest symptom of fatigue during the whole speech, which was delivered louder than he thought would be necessary to be heard all over the House of Commons. He checked me several times for becoming too excited and high-pitched."

In 1854, any one who listened might have heard, like Kubla Khan, "ancestral voices prophesying war." But Sir Stafford Northcote being busy with his private combat against the ancient customs of the Civil Service, has little to say in his letters about Russia, Turkey, and Crimean affairs. He read 'The Coming Struggle,' an Apocalyptic and much-advertised tract, and found it "delicious, but no one but Trevelyan who believes in it." "There is a terrible storm in the Civil Service about our plan," he writes to Lady Northcote (March 2), "and Gladstone relies so much on me that I must not desert him till it is fairly over." Mr Gladstone was in consultation with him about a possible clause in a "Bill for the Total Abolition of Oaths in the Colleges and University of Oxford." At this time he had views about standing for South Devon, and canvassed there, without, as he notices, bringing on the disagreeable symptoms in his heart. "Watson told me they would probably always continue, and give me warning from time to time if I did what I ought not."

An early reference to the Russian war, declared in March, occurs on March 26: "They say there will be great commotions in Germany if the war comes on. The

little kings will swear by Russia, and the people are all ready to pitch into the kings if they take the Czar's part, so that a regular social war will be coming about." But these hints are mingled with more copious remarks about organising a new Archery Club, and with efforts to secure a competent drawing-master for the School of Art at Exeter. By November 18 he says, "What anxious times are these! . . . I cannot help sympathising with the Russian general's speech to Captain Fellowes, that our charge (at Balaklava) was an *attaque de fous*." On December 7, he is going down to Downing Street "to leave an energetic protest which I have written against the scandalous idea of appointing Mr Hayward to succeed Lord Courtenay at the Poor Law Board, passing over all the meritorious Civil servants there in favour of a man . . . with no claims but those of a violent political writer." On this matter of Mr Hayward's appointment, Mr Gladstone wrote to Sir Stafford Northcote (December 7), disclaiming any connection with the business. But he is "aware of no reason why the appointment should excite indignation. I do not know Mr Hayward well, but I believe him to be an honourable, able, and accomplished man." In a later note (December 20), Mr Gladstone says that he is "not only not offended by Sir Stafford's letter about Mr Hayward, but that nothing which you say can offend me. But I do not agree with you, which is quite another matter."

On February 26, 1855, Sir Stafford Northcote, being then at Pynes, received this telegram from Mr Gladstone: "If

you wish for Parliament, come up instantly without fail to me; if not, answer by telegraph." There was a seat vacant at Dudley, and Lord Ward, who appears almost to have owned the constituency, was anxious that Sir Stafford Northcote should present himself as a candidate. On February 28 he was at Dudley, whence he wrote to Lady Northcote:—

"I am here, and on the point of beginning operations, but can hardly say yet whether I am likely to go on with them. I am to meet a number of influential people in about half an hour, and shall then find how the land lies. Two or three candidates have been talked of, but I imagine no one has any real chance against Lord Ward, and Ward himself treats the idea of his losing the seat as an absurdity. His agent, Mr Smith, with whom I am staying, is more cautious, and talks somewhat in the —— —— strain, though the upshot of his speculations is that he does not much expect a contest at all. I imagine the whole affair will be of a very different complexion from that of last year. My strength lies (beyond Ward's support) in my having been at the Board of Trade, and being able to take the character of 'a man of business.' There will be no personal bother about Puseyism, but some trouble about Church rates. I shall come out strong with Civil Service reform, which Mr Smith says will be popular.

"Lord Ward is a staunch Peelite, and very anxious that the borough should be represented by a pure animal of that breed, but if there was to be any admixture he would

rather it were Derbyism than Radicalism. He applied to Gladstone and Sydney Herbert to recommend him a candidate of this complexion, and Gladstone said he thought it would be as nearly as possible mine. Ward wanted to run down and see me at Pynes, but Gladstone persuaded him to send for me. I had a long talk with him before I came here, and I believe we agree upon almost everything at present. He takes rather a higher Church line than I should do, but is pretty liberal."

On March 1 he writes from Birmingham:—

"BIRMINGHAM, *March* 1, 1855.

"All is going on well with me. My two threatened rivals, one a Conservative, the other a Liberal, have successively been withdrawn by their friends. The Conservatives heartily support me, and the leading and most respectable Liberals say they shall not take any part against me. This makes me practically safe, though very probably some ultra-Radical will be started at the last in order to make a speech, if not to go to the poll. I am, however, determined not to fall into the former blunder of thinking myself too sure, and mean to stay at Dudley till the whole is over, and to keep up an active personal canvass. I believe if I work the place well, and stick closely to the business which will have to be done for it in Parliament, I may make myself perfectly secure here for an indefinite time. What they want is a man who will attend to their interests, and my only danger was from the cir-

cumstance that my Liberal rival is an ironmaster in extensive business, and one well acquainted with 'the wants of the district.' There is no political excitement at all, and the cross-questioning is very mild and gentlemanly.

"The writ will, I hope, be moved to-night, and if sent at once, the election may take place on Wednesday or Thursday in next week. I think I had better go straight to London and take my seat, and then down to Pynes on Saturday week. I must endeavour to keep my appointment with Addington, and lecture at Honiton, though I have little time to think of heraldry; and I must be on the Grand Jury, if possible. We shall have to consult, too, as to the best course of proceeding under these new and revolutionary circumstances. I sometimes think I am a fool for my pains; but the opening is certainly the most tempting that could have been presented."

The history of the election, which was not very exciting, though very important to the candidate, is told in the letters to Lady Northcote. "People are delighted at the union of interests between the Conservatives and Lord Ward, who has lately been on bad terms with them, owing to that vile Coalition." He refers to his difficulties in South Devon, where a cry of "Puseyite!" had been raised against him successfully, and not for the last time: "To-night we had a great meeting of all sorts in the town hall, at which the Radical leaders attended, and at which I was

told I must expect some rough handling. Moreover, I had the gratification of finding that some of those charming South Devon placards had been sent up to the Radicals here, and that Mr Galton's curate and the Rev. Spencer Northcote were fairly introduced to the people of Dudley. So I thought I was in for it; and seeing the two leading Radicals with lists of questions to put to me, I made a sort of Balaklava charge, and gave them my mind upon all the points they were likely to take up, which made them scratch out one question after another before I got to the end, and took the wind quite out of their sails. We had resolved when we went in that no resolution should be proposed in my favour for fear of its being out-voted; but we had the meeting so completely with us by the time I had done, that the chairman put a resolution to adopt me, and it was carried with only five dissentients! All my friends are in a state of high excitement, and say such a thing was never known in Dudley. I am lucky in succeeding poor old Mr Benbow, who was eighty-seven years old, and of course could neither canvass nor speak effectively. Indeed they say no one has personally canvassed the electors for fifteen or twenty years till now, and it tells uncommonly. Several gave their promises straight off when told 'this is the gentleman himself come to ask you.'"

By March 8 he found that his hopes of a "walk over" were to be disappointed. A candidate was proposed without his own consent in the Radical interest, and a poll had to be taken. "I don't mind the delay, after all," he writes;

Photogravure Etching. Printed by Bowman Brothers & Co. Paris

CECILIA FRANCES, COUNTESS OF IDDESLEIGH (at the age of 24)

From the picture by George Richmond R.A.

"for every day improves my acquaintance with the people, and shows that I am something besides Lord Ward's friend."

On March 9 he was returned for Dudley, and at last entered the House which, with a brief interval after 1857, was to be the scene of his principal work almost to the end.

On March 16, Sir Stafford Northcote took his seat, and voted in three divisions. "I think I shall like the House," he writes, "but it is 'hearly days' yet." He sat among the moderate Conservatives, and voted (in the minority) in favour of Mr Cobbett's motion respecting "Short Time for Women and Children in Factories." "It is curious," he says, "to find Mr Cobbett's father's son such a thorough gentleman, plain, sensible, and temperate both in manner and expression." Mr Bright "spoke on the other side, but very ineffectively."

He expected to make his maiden speech on reformatory schools.[1] "There is a squib going about,—a bill giving power to the 'Times' to finish the war. Some of the clauses are very rich. One recites that whereas the said paper declared Sebastopol to have been taken, now be it enacted that the said paper shall have full power and authority to take the said city, and if the said paper shall declare the said city to have been taken, it shall be deemed to have been taken accordingly."

[1] An account of Sir Stafford Northcote's exertions in the cause of reformatory schools, with a description of his personal experience in organising and managing the school near Pynes, will be found in another chapter.

His seat at Dudley did not seem likely to be held without at least a chance of trouble. "Lord Palmerston," he wrote to Lady Northcote, "has lost almost all the credit he had in the country. It is nobody's interest to overthrow the Government, for such overthrow would be preceded by a dissolution which nobody wants. . . . I hope myself that it is not coming this year. If the Government are cautious, and Dizzy is not carried away by some fit of temper or eagerness, things may go on for a good while. Sir G. C. Lewis is a terribly dull speaker after Gladstone, but he is therefore the less likely to provoke a storm."

Mr Gladstone had opposed Mr Roebuck's motion for a committee to make inquiry into the conduct of the Crimean War. The motion was carried, Mr Gladstone resigned, and was succeeded by Sir George Cornewall Lewis as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

On March 17, Sir Stafford was girding himself up to defend his Civil Service scheme in the House against Mr Thompson Hankey. He was also concerned in business little to his mind.

"I am to dine quietly with Mr Sothern and Sir William Heathcote, to begin the great Oxford Conferences. It is a sad business to be deliberating in this way whether we shall withdraw Gladstone, and I don't think any good will come of it. Personal feeling apart, I think we shall do best in keeping him as our candidate, at all events unless any communication comes from the enemy, which is very unlikely. . . . There seems to be some real expectation of peace; at least the Russians have opened the

Conference in the most favourable manner. The difficulty is apprehended more from Louis Napoleon than any one else."

He was not yet by any means at home in the House. On March 20 he writes: "It is rather lengthy work sitting as I did yesterday from 4 o'clock till 1 A.M.—nine hours—and there is a disadvantage in not knowing very many members, and in sitting in a different part of the House from most of those I do know. My usual neighbours are very nice people — Sir W. Heathcote, Charlie [*i.e.*, Charles Lushington, his brother-in-law], Egerton, Seymour Fitzgerald, Liddell, Mowbray, and Lord Blandford; but when they are not in their places I am in the midst of a heap of Irish members, who are not the best of company. I send you a sort of sketch of the way we sit; of course the benches hold many more than I note, and the Irish members spread themselves, when there is a large attendance of them, on our two front benches. I am afraid to go and sit anywhere but where I do, at least until I have had an opportunity of making myself a distinct character, for they judge of you a good deal by your place in the House."

On the Fast Day (March 20) he went to St Margaret's, "with the House—that is to say, about 150 members and the Speaker. Oddly enough I was placed next to Disraeli, who entered into conversation with me very amicably afterwards, and agreed with me that the sermon was exceedingly 'flash.'" It must have exceeded in that direction if it appeared too Asiatic for Mr Disraeli's taste.

"Every now and then the preacher paused at the end of a flowery sentence, and the whole congregation coughed and sneezed approvingly, exactly as if they were cheering. I was a good deal disgusted."

Of his maiden speech he writes, March 26: "My *speech* the other night was a very short one, and intended rather as an experiment. I was not in the least nervous, and found I could think and decide 'upon my legs,' as they say, so I shall feel comfortable for the future. I was very well received, especially considering that there were very few of my particular friends in the House, and that the subject of Civil Service reform, and particularly of the competition system, is exceedingly unpopular in the House. I shall be in no hurry to speak again, and least of all upon that subject, unless it is forced upon me, and in any case I shall not make a great speech upon it. Sir John Pakington's Education Bill is the opportunity I am next looking forward to. My neighbours, while I was speaking, were George Buck, Charlie, and Ker Seymer, who of course cheered me, and Roundell Palmer was sitting opposite. The Government benches were pretty full, but they of course were ominously silent. Most of the cheering came from the Layard neighbourhood! where there is a great mass of unattached talent sitting below the Peelites and the Manchester school, such as Laing, Roebuck, Layard, Drummond, Walter, &c. Dizzy did me the honour to turn round and look very attentive. You see altogether I am not in very bad company. Sir John Pakington asked to be introduced to me, and we were very amicable."

At a *levée*, on March 26, he had some talk with Prince Albert, who congratulated him on entering the House, and who with some reason objected to the use of the expression "first-rate." It is not Addisonian English.

A break in his correspondence ends on July 4, in a little argument with Lady Northcote about Lord Robert Grosvenor's Sunday Bill and the mob:—

"R. AGRICULTURAL ROOMS,
July 4, 1855.

"I am quite amenable to criticism, but I think, in the present case, I am in the right, and you are in the wrong; and the reason you are in the wrong is, because you are ready to believe the 'Times.' Lord Robert Grosvenor's bill had nothing to do with the question of the religious observance of Sunday. It was a bill for enabling the 'less comfortably situated members of society,' for whom you say you are interested, to make the day 'a happy holiday,' if they chose, as you say you wish them to make it. The mischief of the present state of the law is, that in London (for it is not so in the country), the strong and rich are able to make it a happy holiday at the expense of the weak and poor. Why should bankers' and solicitors' clerks, merchants' foremen, and all that class of people, who like to have their Sunday holiday after a week of desk-work, be allowed to force Sunday labour upon shopmen who are equally desirous of a country walk and a day's respite? You say it is a matter of private bargain. I beg leave to say it is not. Where there is

a bargain there must be some kind of equality between those who bargain, and in this case there is not. Suppose builders were allowed to carry on their business on Sunday, and Mr Ware thought it to his interest to carry on his—taking his own holiday but compelling Henry Allen to work—what would you say? Labourers and persons in the employ of others have no real freedom in these matters. Suppose I chose to make all my labourers on the farm work on Sunday, could they refuse? If they did, I should turn them off and employ others. As you are a bit of a political economist, just look at Mill's 'Political Economy,' which you will find in the library, and refer to Book V., chap. xi. sec. 12, where you will find that he lays down that these are matters in which the interference of law is required, not to overrule the judgment of individuals respecting their own interest, but to give effect to that judgment, they being unable to give effect to it except by concert, which cannot be effectual unless it receives validity and sanction from law. There are plenty of cases in which this is done, such as the limitation of the hours of factory labour, the prohibition of the truck system, &c.; but indeed the same might be said of almost every law we have. Every law interferes with the 'natural right' of people to do as they choose, and every law which protects the weak against the strong is open to the same kind of objections on the part of the strong as those which you raise against the Sunday Trading Bill when you say that such trading is a matter of mutual convenience and arrangement. Our point is, that it is

not a matter of *mutual* convenience, but of *one-sided* convenience."

In these familiar letters the gravest things in political partisanship are but lightly treated. Thus, when Lord John Russell came back from Vienna, and was not able to explain very happily his conduct, abroad and at home, in the negotiations for peace, Sir Stafford writes (July 7), "What a terrible exposure Lord John has made of himself! . . . I really felt quite sorry for him last night. Upon the whole, I should think these disclosures must shake the Government, and certainly they must help the peace party: it won't do now to single out Gladstone as the advocate of a dishonourable peace, as Lord John acknowledges that both he and Drouyn de Lhuys thought, and still think, the Austrian terms admissible. Well, sich is life."

Mr Gladstone's attitude about the war and its bloodiness had been rather like that which he took when the Boers beat us at Majuba.. When a statesman, who approves of the beginning of a war, would withdraw from it in the middle because of the "effusion of blood," one is reminded of Mark Twain's reply to the French *témoin*, in a burlesque account of M. Gambetta's duel. Mr Twain, as second, proposed Axes for weapons. "That would lead to bloodshed," remarked the other. "Why, what does *your* side propose to shed?" asked Mark Twain. But Sir Stafford's words are one more proof of his loyal devotion to Mr Gladstone.

The Sunday mobs, Lady Northcote's "friends," as Sir Stafford calls them, had been busy in the West End: "Your friends came up Albany Street and Albert Road on Sunday, and broke Frank Newman's and Brodie's windows, with those of many other persons. They also came to Mansfield Street and broke Liddell's windows, and were coming on to Charles and Ker Seymer, but the latter hearing the row went out and mustered some police, and so kept them off. It is very selfish on the part of rich people who can amuse themselves in any way they please all the week, to object to these poor fellows, who are kept hard at work, taking a holiday and amusing themselves by throwing stones on Sunday. I really begin to agree with you that we legislate too much in these matters, and that we ought to have a bill to provide that all laws should be suspended on Sunday, and everybody should do as they please. Arthur (now Lord Hobhouse) and Mary are vigorous supporters of your side of the question. T. H. is on mine."

His political ideas, especially about the "Coalition" he detested so,. are frankly expressed in the following note:—

"I made a pretty successful speech yesterday, though it is poorly reported in the 'Times' to-day. The House was very full and very impatient, and I rose after an earnest appeal from Sir W. Clay that there might be no more speeches; but I managed to get a very good hearing, and plenty of cheers from my own side. I did not make a very long speech, but I fancy it was the best I

have made yet. You see I inflict all my vanity upon you! Phillimore made a capital speech.

"It is likely enough that the Government may be upset within the next few days. An attempt will be made to-night to force the discussion of Sir E. B. Lytton's vote of censure to-morrow. It is rumoured that Lord John will go out, and be succeeded by Lord Elgin, but even this may not save the Cabinet. The worst of it is, there is nobody to come in who will do any better. Now the fruits of that miserable Coalition, which I have always abhorred, are beginning to taste bitter. Oh, what a position the Peelites might now have had if they had never joined it! As it is, they have rendered their accession to power impossible at present, and we are reduced to Derby, Dizzy, and Ellenborough. It is a bad business, I fear."

Later he adds, characteristically, for though he had disliked Lord John Russell, he was a very bad hater: "You will be edified at hearing that I am taking up the cudgels for Lord John Russell, against whom I think there has been rather an unfair cry. . . . I voted in the majority last night, for disposing of Spooner and Maynooth. I hope my constituents will not be very angry." This, he presumes, will ruin his character at Exeter. "I hope they won't burn me more than in effigy."

Here the correspondence practically ends for 1855.

CHAPTER V.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

INTEREST IN REFORMATORY SCHOOLS—SKETCH OF THEIR HISTORY —THE SCHOOL AT PYNES—ALARM OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD— GALE, BURNS, AND SPARKS—ANECDOTES—LATER WORK IN REFORMATORY SCHOOLS—HIS BILL, "THE OMNIBUS"—SUCCESS OF THE BILL.

THE year 1855 is memorable in the life of Sir Stafford Northcote, and in the history of the county of Devonshire, for the starting of a reformatory school for boys. This was an example, on a convenient scale, of the good that a country gentleman may do, in the least pretentious way, by a wise use of his influence, and a judicious employment of the means most readily at hand. To understand what was done, it may be well to give a short sketch of the attempts previously made to rescue boys on the verge, or over the verge, of crime. This admirable work, more than anything else, engaged Sir Stafford Northcote, both in and out of Parliament, between 1854 and 1858.

The reformatory movement occupied the mind of the public greatly after 1850; and as its importance is now somewhat forgotten, owing to the institution of a wider

system of education, it is worth while to bring to recollection the various steps taken in the institution of reformatory schools for the young in substitution of jails.

The great Howard had not omitted to consider this branch of philanthropy, and in 1773 had called attention to the discipline of juvenile delinquents. In 1780, the Philanthropic Society of London, which is now familiar by reason of its Reformatory School at Redhill, was set on foot by private subscription. In 1815, the Prison Discipline Society was founded, to save young offenders from contact with more hardened offenders. In 1817, the Stretton Institution was commenced at Stretton on Dunsmore, in Warwickshire, founded by the Warwickshire magistrates.

In 1830, the Hon. Amelia Murray and Captain E. P. Brenton were making efforts to rescue children from a life of wrong-doing, and they established a Children's Friend Society, for the purpose of reclaiming the neglected and destitute children that infested the streets of the metropolis, and to find employment for them after they had given proof of their reformation. In 1838, an Act of Parliament was passed (1 & 2 Vict. c. 82), which had for its principal object the establishment of a separate prison for juvenile offenders (Parkhurst), but which also contained a clause enabling the Crown to place young offenders under sentence of transportation or imprisonment at any charitable institution for their reformation, on terms which would give the directors of such institution legal control over them.

English reformatory schools, Sir Stafford Northcote remarked, derived their pedigree from these three sources—the Philanthropic Society, the Juvenile Prison at Parkhurst, and the Children's Friend Society of Captain Brenton and the Hon. Miss Murray.

The Philanthropic Society had as its object the rescue of the children of convicts, and the reformation of those children who had themselves been convicted; but gradually the education of children of convicts had been given up, and the number of convicts had increased. The Rev. Sydney Turner, who was chaplain of the institution, after a visit to the French reformatory at Mettray, had established the agricultural colony at Redhill.

Perhaps the reformatory movement had been more important on the Continent than in England. In 1810, M. de Feldenberg established at Hofwyl a labour school for beggars and criminal children. In Prussia, near Düsseldorf, in 1816, Count Von der Recke and his father first received a few wretched children into their home; then the father gave up his house, and finally purchased an estate for them.

In 1833, Dr Wichern and others established the Rauhe Haus near Hamburg for the worst class of street vagrants, establishing therein the "family" system. In 1852, the Rauhe Haus consisted of a hamlet of twenty houses and one hundred children. The "family" system has proved more advantageous for influencing the affections of the children than the larger institutions.

The Rauhe Haus formed the type on which the great

French reformatory of Mettray was cast. But it also arose from the system of detention which prevailed in France, and which had induced M. Lucas, Inspector-General of French Prisons, to form an association for the "patronage" of young convicts, and to assist them in their efforts to obtain honest employment. The society induced the Government to appoint a commission to inquire as to the best means of reforming the young. The commission reported in favour of an agricultural colony, as involving life in the open air and greater distance from temptation.

M. de Courteille, the friend of M. de Metz, one of the commissioners, offered his estate at Mettray for the purpose, and in 1840 they began to receive their colonists; in 1855 there were 400 boys. By the year 1853, in the various institutions based on the model of Mettray, there were 6443 children received.

Such were the various convergent movements which awakened the public sentiment to the necessity of extending reformatory institutions in England, and which were greatly furthered by Miss Carpenter's work, published in 1851, on Reformatory Schools.

It was established that the most vicious and degraded children could be brought under moral and religious control, and made useful members of society, provided that those who engaged in the work undertook it in a spirit of enlightened philanthropy; that more than merely voluntary support was necessary, and that the parents themselves ought to contribute to the maintenance of their children.

The Act establishing Parkhurst contained a clause authorising the sending of convicts to Redhill under conditional pardons. The clause had been enforced, and as a doubt arose as to whether it was not necessary that the boy should not have been sentenced if not to transportation yet to a long period of imprisonment, the courts began to inflict nominally severe sentences for slight offences in order to get the children into Redhill. About this time, too, Miss M. Carpenter, Mr M. D. Hill, and Mr Sydney Turner called together a conference at Birmingham to discuss the reformatory cause. The meeting was small, but their published report was of great importance. It seems to have been the cause of the appointment of a committee of the House of Commons to take into consideration the treatment of criminal and destitute juveniles. The committee sat through two sessions, and in 1853 reported strongly in favour of the reformatory system.

In 1854, an Act was passed authorising judges and magistrates to commit children under sixteen years of age to schools duly licensed by the Secretary of State, for periods varying from two to five years. Power was taken to charge the parents with a weekly contribution, and the Treasury was authorised to pay towards the same.

Before this Act passed, Mr Barwick Baker's school was at work, also Mr Adderley's school at Saltby, Miss Carpenter's and Mr Scot's near Bristol, and Mr Sturges's near Droitwich.

Soon after the passing of the Act, many other schools

were started—Devonshire being the first county to move, and Sir Stafford Northcote supplying land and buildings.

Within a mile of Pynes, in the valley of the Exe, there is a rising ground on the verge of a wood. Here, half-way up the hill, stand three or four cottages, surrounded by kitchen-gardens in admirable order, and especially brilliant with hollyhocks and apples in the month of August. The grounds and other patches near are tilled by boys of polite aspect and kindly manners, who are the inmates of the cottages, and who there learn divers trades and handicrafts under Mr Harris, the master originally appointed in 1855. The schools now contain about thirty boys, who have been rescued from the commencement of careers not creditable to them nor of service to the State. Their living is of the plainest character, their discipline apparently excellent, and it is believed that the comparative decline of crime in Devonshire is due in part to the influence of this reformatory. During Sir Stafford's life the place was always one of his foremost interests. When in the country during his earlier years he attended to every detail: he visited the place regularly, read to the boys, won their confidence, and used to hold a class himself on Sundays. For those who left the school he sought places in the merchant service and elsewhere, and it is impossible to calculate how many lads he won from a miserable and mischievous to a happy and useful life. Of the original establishment of this reformatory, Lady Iddesleigh has kindly written the following brief account, which leaves little to be added—though the letters of 1855, 1856, 1857,

are full of references to the institution in its early days of struggle. These struggles were hard, as will be seen. In the high places of philanthropy, Lord Shaftesbury opposed the scheme; the keepers dreaded poaching (for boys will be boys, and all boys of all degrees are poachers); the villagers feared the rise of a kind of Dotheboys Hall, and the farmers trembled for their ricks. Nor were they encouraged by the omen of the names of the first three lads admitted—Messrs Sparks, Gale, and Burns, titles eminently incendiary. What follows is the note by Lady Iddesleigh:—

"The Brampford Wood Reformatory was started in April 1855: it was established as nearly as possible on the plan of Mr Barwick Baker's reformatory farm-school in Gloucestershire, which had received much and just commendation for the simplicity and economy of all its arrangements, two cottages thrown into one, and no attempt at expense in building or laying out. Every effort was made by Sir Stafford to keep down all unnecessary expense of this description. From the position and good water-supply the Brampford Reformatory has always been a remarkably healthy one, and in the early days of its establishment, Sir Stafford was a constant visitor, and superintended all the arrangements. Prejudices of all sorts were raised against it.

"To the late Judge Coleridge, father of the Lord Chief-Justice, we find him writing—

"'I daresay we are over sanguine as to the amount of good to be done, but I am not disposed to abate my

hopes without full trial of a well-arranged school. The conditions are: 1. Youth. 2. Apparent fitness for improvement,—for I don't think regular scamps are the class to be operated on. 3. Strict discipline. 4. A sound practical education of an industrial character. I don't want to teach the 'ologies.

"'As to your apologue of John and Dick, I hold that, if you admit for argument's sake that Dick may be converted by means of a reformatory school from a pickpocket to an artisan earning easily £5 a-week, you admit not only a great deal more than we venture to expect, but so much that it amounts to a conclusive argument in our favour. There are many cases in which a rogue has the advantage over an honest man in this life by means of his roguery; but in this case Dick's advantage will be owing, not to his roguery, but to his education. You may say he obtained his education by his roguery in the first instance, but nothing can be easier than to place the same education within the reach of the honest man as well as the rogue. The father of the two lads will have had to pay 5s. a-week (under the Act) for Dick's education, and for a much less sum than that he might have given John an equally good one. Depend upon it, that if the advantages of a sound education come to be so highly prized that parents will bring their children up to crime in order that they may obtain it for them at the high cost of 5s. a-week, they will soon find out a simpler and less objectionable way of arriving at the result. I ventured to remind our audience at Exeter that, though Ho ti

found it necessary to burn his house down in order to get roast-pig, less expensive measures were soon invented by his countrymen, and so I hope it will be with us.'

"Again, in November 1854, in asking the Judge for a small subscription for the reformatory, which he gave, Sir Stafford says: 'There are difficulties in the way of raising a large fund at the present time, and on several accounts it is desirable that we should begin with a small establishment, rented premises, and annual subscriptions. Our idea is that £200 a-year will be amply sufficient for our purpose.' After some money details, he adds: 'We mean to keep the boys almost wholly to spade industry and other hard out-of-door work. I would give little instruction beyond religious teaching, reading, writing, and arithmetic, and would not allow more than two hours to be spent in that manner. I am anxious that we should have a secluded place, and as little fuss made about the school or its inmates as possible.'

"There had been some idea of placing the reformatory on Stoke Hill; but the old farmer on whose ground it had been suggested to place it, objected on the ground that all the rabbits and birds in the Stoke Wood covers, of which Lord Iddesleigh rented the shooting from the Church, would be poached by the boys. Some of the villagers believed that the school would become a dreadful place of torture to the criminal boys placed there, and the farmers feared that it would become a hotbed of wickedness to corrupt the neighbourhood. Sir Stafford visited it constantly, and superintended every detail, the food,

labour, employments, instruction, rewards, and punishments, and himself gave Scripture instruction every Sunday for years. Mr Bengough spent some weeks at Pynes in the April of 1855 in order to start the school. Mr Bengough was at that time a young man of leisure and some property, who had devoted his energies and money to good works.

"By degrees the good done by these reformatory schools conquered the prejudices which even good people entertained against them.

"Towards the close of 1855, Lord Iddesleigh met M. de Metz, who had established the famous *colonic agricole* for criminal boys at Mettray; he also was in constant communication with Lord Norton, Mr Barwick Baker, Miss Carpenter, the present Bishop of St Albans (Claughton); and attended meetings at Hams, Hardwicke, Westwood (Sir J. Pakington's), and Birmingham on the subject. Many years later, in 1869, when giving his experience of reformatory management at the inauguration of the training-ship Formidable at Bristol, Lord Iddesleigh says: 'I suppose the immediate object of this ship is for the benefit of Bristol and the neighbourhood; but some of the boys may be found not suitable for sea service, and I would make the suggestion that you should exchange such boys with me for some whom I could find suitable. I would also give a hint which may seem unnecessary or impertinent, but when you are getting boys out, it is well in the first instance to send them for a long voyage and not on coasting service. The latter is very dangerous for the

class with which we have to deal, for if disgusted with the treatment they receive, in some cases hard, they run away and get into mischief in some seaport town or other. In a long voyage they may at first dislike it, but before they return they steady down and often regain their characters. I recollect the first boy with whom I had to deal was very troublesome, and I was no doubt rather green then. This boy ran away several times, and was so very bad that I bethought me of my friend Mr Barwick Baker, and thinking his experience would enable him to reclaim the lad, I sent him to his reformatory; but he did no better there, and even ran away from him. The question arose, whether we would not let him go, but as a last resource we sent him to the Akbar training-ship at Liverpool. He tried the same game there, and once did get away, but was taken back, and eventually went to sea. Two years afterwards I was in my house in London, when a cab drove to the door, and a fine-looking young sailor got down from the box, and knocking asked to see me. It was my old friend the unmanageable lad, who had returned from China, and had come to report himself to me and show me the money he had got, and he is still doing thoroughly well.'"

To all his dealings with the difficult question of reformatories, Sir Stafford Northcote brought not only his goodness of heart, but his humour, and his sympathy with the wild and unconsciously humorous tribe of boys. In a letter to Lady Iddesleigh, he mentions that he had "sent his love to Gale" (Gale, of Sparks and Gale, the

first comers to the reformatory), "who has made two attempts to run away from his ship." In his 'Quarterly' article (1856), he quotes Mr Symons's remark, that bad boys "are not errant angels, whose reformation requires little else than fondling." He tells a story of some children, pickpockets by calling, like Defoe's 'Colonel Jack,' who escaped from a reformatory school, "intending to maintain themselves as of old, but who were forced to give up the attempt, and surrender to the police, because want of practice had shattered their nerve and made them 'timoursome.' 'And besides, sir,' said the ringleader, 'our fingers was all crooked with work, and we couldn't get them straight to go into the pockets.'" He had found instances, on the Continent, of boys run wild during Napoleon's wars, so wild that (almost after the manner of Romulus and Remus) they "had actually lived amongst and been suckled by Westphalian swine." Without these adventures he found our own young criminal population animated by "a perversion of taste and a dislike of regularity," which are very natural to the uncivilised human being. The task of reformatories was to counteract that perversion. Sir Stafford Northcote's article remains a most useful summary of the history of the movement.

This chapter may conclude with a recapitulation of Sir Stafford's later action, in 1856, about the cause of industrial training.

A Reformatory Union was projected, the first meeting of which was held at Bristol in August 1856. The object

of the union was to collect and diffuse information on the subject of reformatories, and generally to promote their cause and the welfare of those received into them. On one of the evenings of the meeting Sir Stafford Northcote read a paper "On previous Imprisonment for Children sentenced to Reformatories." "To some," he said, "it appears that the reformatory school is but the commencement of a wholly new system of penal legislation, that what we are now doing for the child is what we must do for the adult also, and that a period of retributive punishment ought in all cases to be followed by one of reformatory discipline. To others our experiment appears to involve the acknowledgment that retributive punishment ought not to be followed by, but to be altogether set aside in favour of, reformatory discipline; others, again, looking on our schools as places where an excellent moral training is afforded to the criminal, advance a claim on the part of the neglected but innocent part of our youthful population to the same advantages, and argue that the compulsory education which we provide for those who have fallen into open crime ought to be extended at least to those whose parents are either unwilling or unable to bring them up in the right way, and so preserve them from the danger of falling before the temptations which a life of crime presents to the undisciplined and the ignorant."

In these remarks Sir Stafford foreshadowed the industrial schools which have since been established. He then discussed the desirability of inflicting previous im-

prisonment, his conclusion being that the punishment was right in itself, for if the child had done wrong, suitable punishment was good for him; that it was better that the imprisonment should be in a place separate from the reformatory, so that there should be a proper distinction between the place of punishment and that of education; and that the imprisonment should not be *associated*, so that all good influences should be brought to bear on the child before he began his work. The speaker then reverted to the question of industrial schools "distinct from but giving the same kind of education as the reformatory school, to which vagrant or deserted children might be committed under magisterial authority."

This matter indeed had been in Sir Stafford's mind earlier in the year, when the Reformatory Bill was under discussion (April 8, 1856). He had then written to Miss Carpenter that there was needed an extension of the Scotch Vagrant Act to England, by which magistrates could send vagrants to industrial schools.

By December 1, a bill had been drafted by Sir Stafford providing for the establishment of industrial schools, to which vagrants and truant children might be sent, and for capitation grants being made by the Treasury, as well as for insisting on parents contributing to the expense of their children while removed from their care.

This was the bill which Sir Stafford cheerfully called "the 'bus," or the omnibus, because he had taken up in it so many "passengers" in the shape of amendments. He "got it through," as he writes to Lady Northcote, on July

17, 1856. Most of his parliamentary attention was given to this measure in 1856, and to the Civil Service Superannuation Bill. Of his thoughts and actions at this date, his letters from town to Lady Northcote in the country are the most useful record. His bill is "liked on the whole," he writes (April 4), but he "has not heard what the Government thinks of it." Lord John Russell was at this time proposing a series of resolutions in which Sir Stafford was interested, as they tended towards the establishment of a national system of education. About the debate on this matter, Sir Stafford remarks that it "is likely to be a pretty higgledy-piggledy." To Lord John's plan, which provided that the quarter sessions for the peace of a county, city, or borough should have the power to impose a school rate, Sir Stafford preferred an extension of the actual system then existing. He spoke in this sense on the 11th April; but when he spoke, Lord John had withdrawn all the important parts of his resolutions, and the condition of the legislation described as "higgledy-piggledy" had been evolved. "The time was certainly not favourable for bringing forward any new proposals, and I did not attempt to do it, though I gave notice that I should do so on a future occasion. Lord John, however, has really thrown the question back instead of advancing it, and I believe it would be most imprudent to 'try on' anything for the present. I was very well listened to at the beginning of my speech, but could not keep the attention of the House to the end, and cut short a great deal that I wanted to say. In fact, nobody could then have

got a hearing except a leading speaker like Gladstone, who made a most admirable speech" (April 12). "I hope to get my bill through," he adds, two days later, "without opposition, but don't know yet; if it is opposed, I shall probably have to postpone it. I am not at all gloomy as to the prospects of popular education, though all chance of great schemes is at an end." Their turn came later.

On April 17 he writes, "I got my bill read yesterday for the second time in the neatest way imaginable, without the possibility of a word being said, as there were only five minutes left for business." While Sir Stafford was busy with the cause of reformatory schools in Parliament, the young disciples in his own school were somewhat ungrateful. A number of them ran away early in May, and Sir Stafford writes, "What a bore they are! There is great carelessness in letting such a number go off together. With Mr and Mrs Harris, Parker, Barnes, and Mary Parker—to say nothing of the baby—there ought to be eyes enough to prevent such a thing."

In a much later letter Sir Stafford writes: "Melville says, and I believe truly, that one great cause of the boys running away is that, having lived in towns and hot rooms, they cannot bear the cold of outdoor country work, and that this, to which they are unaccustomed, makes them also feel short diet. There is no doubt that the class of town boys, who have been our runaways, are physically as well as morally in an unhealthy state, and cannot bear bracing discipline without flinching from it." Perhaps

one may add that anybody will flinch under "short diet," if it is only short enough.

While at Teignmouth, on Yeomanry business, Sir Stafford went to visit a very difficult old pupil, Burns—one of the Gale and Sparks contingent—the veterans of the establishment. Burns was now in service. "He seems very comfortable, and his master and mistress report well of him on the whole, and seem to be kind to him. It is, thus far, a case to be very thankful for. No boy was ever in a more rapid road to ruin."

The omnibus was piloted through Committee on May 23, 1856:—

"My bill came on about eight o'clock, and went through Committee very swimmingly; indeed the original bill, containing all I cared about, was passed with scarcely a single remark; and the only discussion arose on some clauses that I gave notice of at the request of other people, who were a sort of passengers in my omnibus. One or two of these were withdrawn. Arthur Gordon moved a clause for getting rid of the previous imprisonment, but did not carry it. I voted with him, but was rather glad that he was not successful, as it was more of an organic change than I wanted to see, and I had declined to take him up on the 'bus."

"X. congratulated me on my wonderful good luck, and impressed upon me that it was only because five or six of us were acting together that we were able to get on at all or even to make a House; but the truth was, that he was rather sore at having so pertinaciously

declined to join me in bringing in the bill, and at having predicted its certain failure. The Government were very friendly. Sir George Grey and Mr Baines took the matter up, and the latter said he thought I had made a most useful improvement in the law, which I was very glad to hear from him, as he really knows and cares more about it than any other member of the Government. Not a *word* was said about the religious difficulty, and both the Scotch members, and Lord E. Howard and the R.C.'s, were quite satisfied with the solution."

CHAPTER VI.

PARLIAMENTARY WORK.

HIS POSITION AS A PARTY MAN—THE KARS DEBATE—REMARKS ON PICTURES—THE "JEW BILL"—END OF SESSION—RELATIONS WITH LORD WARD—MR GLADSTONE AND MR DISRAELI—THE CHINESE QUESTION—DETERMINES TO STAND FOR NORTH DEVON—DEFEAT—WITHDRAWAL TO PARIS—OFFER OF A PLACE IN CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT—EARLY VIEWS OF MR DISRAELI—ELECTED AT STAMFORD—FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO TREASURY—OFFICIAL DUTIES—MR DISRAELI'S REFORM BILL—DEFEAT OF HIS PARTY—LETTER ON POLICY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE AND EXPENDITURE—MR GLADSTONE'S SHAKE OF THE HEAD—KNOWSLEY—"THE SITUATION"—NAPOLEON—SPEECH ON PAPER DUTIES—THE FRENCH COMMERCIAL TREATY—SPEECHES ON FINANCE—YACHTING CRUISE—GREAT SUCCESS OF HIS BUDGET SPEECH—CONGRATULATIONS—BOOK ON FINANCIAL POLICY—EDUCATION—MR DISRAELI ON THE TIMES—THACKERAY.

THE more active part of Sir Stafford Northcote's parliamentary work during 1856 has already been described. He was chiefly busy with his bill about reformatory schools, which, again, led to his bill on industrial schools. As a party man he was able to take no very decided line; and, as Mr Gladstone says in a letter of this year, had

chiefly to describe himself by negatives. "Lord Ward and Gladstone think me more of a Derbyite than a Peelite, which is true." He regarded himself as a kind of link between the Derbyites and Peelites, but he had no keen interest, as yet, in the wars of shifting factions. On April 17, 1856, he writes to Lady Northcote: "They say the Queen is not likely to consent to a dissolution, but this is a doubtful speculation. I hope there may be none, for I should like well enough to have another year in Parliament, and I have serious doubts whether I should stand again in case of a dissolution." This is not the language of a very keen player at the political game. As it chanced, when a dissolution did come, he stood again, unsuccessfully, leaving the constituency of Dudley for that of North Devon. This change was chiefly due, as will be seen, to two causes. He did not care to represent Lord Ward, which was practically his position; and he did agree with Mr Gladstone that an agricultural constituency best suited his social and political position and attainments. Meanwhile he did not swell the torrent of talk on great occasions. He heard Mr Whiteside, in the Kars debate, attack the Government, and "speak for four hours and a half with the sort of energy that a man sometimes gets up for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, . . . and he never touched as much as a drop of water the whole time. As a piece of acting it was very great. The way in which his voice trembled with suppressed laughter when he read extracts from the Blue-book to show how inadequately the Govern-

ment provided for great emergencies was very telling, and some of his bursts of indignation were very fine." Suppressed laughter and bursts of indignation have not yet taught English Governments (1890) to provide for great emergencies. Indeed Sir Stafford himself adds: "Nevertheless the Government will have a large majority, for the security and honour of England are about the last things that large majorities care for." "I shall vote for Whiteside myself," Sir Stafford says; "but a good many of my friends intend either to stay away or to support the Government." "I cannot understand," he remarks, "why it is that there is such general reluctance to vote against the Government in this matter; it seems to me that a clear though not very strong case has been made out against them. I am partly in hopes that Gladstone will speak against them, but I suppose he will not vote."

From these almost innocent remarks, it is plain that politics was a game of which Sir Stafford Northcote had not yet learned to appreciate the humour. His party was "utterly smashed, as we well deserved to be," in the vote of May 1. "My chief comfort is that a large number of our rank and file are coming to the conclusion that there is nothing to be done but range ourselves under the Peelites." How sagaciously the Tory game had been played on Mr Whiteside's motion to censure the Government for neglecting the safety and health of an English army, may be gathered from the following extract of a letter to Lady Northcote:—

"It is too long a story to tell you the history of Seymer's amendment, for which 54 of us voted against 453; but it is a curious instance of indecisive manœuvring, and a strong proof of our people's imbecility. The amendment was originally drawn up by Disraeli himself, as long ago as last Friday; and was to have been proposed immediately after Whiteside's speech on the Monday, and all our men would have voted with it, and so probably would the Peelites, and we should have had a close division or perhaps a majority. On Monday morning Lord Derby called us together and told us we were all to vote with Whiteside, and Seymer was told to give up his amendment. On Tuesday evening Lord Malmesbury withdrew his motion (which was the double of Whiteside's) in the House of Lords, on the very grounds stated in Seymer's amendment (the approaching discussion of the treaty of peace), and on the same evening Seymer was desired to move his amendment, which he did, although it was now too late to catch the Peelites. Yesterday, finding the Peelites were not to be caught, and that Seymer's amendment was treated as a sign of weakness, our wise leaders threw him over and resolved for a vote with Whiteside; but even then they would not stop the amendment being moved, and no one knew to the last whether they wished us to vote for it or against it. It was as nice a hash as you can imagine. Of the 54 who voted with Seymer, 25 left the House without voting at all on the main question, 18 voted with Whiteside, and 11 voted with the Government.

Disraeli made a really good speech, which he does not often do. Layard was well and deservedly peppered by Bulwer, Graham, Disraeli, and Whiteside. . . . Bulwer's speech, except as to Layard, was frothy in the extreme. Graham's was good, and damaging to the Government, though he voted with them. Palmerston also was pretty good. He was in high spirits of course.

"J. was horribly disgusted, and gave formal notice that he should no longer attend meetings of the party or answer their circulars. I confess that (trimmer as Henta. calls me) I am rather too much of a partisan to give up so easily; and I am secretly not much displeased at the turn things are taking. I have been acting as a sort of go-between to the Peelites and our own side, and I am sure there is an excellent feeling springing up between us. At the same time, this large majority disposes of the idea of a dissolution for the present, and unless some unexpected turn is taken, we shall go on quietly for the rest of the session."

By way of relaxation from politics, we may quote a few extracts on Art. Sir Stafford Northcote viewed the Exhibitions of 1856, and the following are his rapid criticisms, as written to Lady Iddesleigh: "I took Mary to the Academy yesterday. There is a good exhibition, but few very striking works. Two sea-pieces of Lee (who comes out in that line for the first time) are charming. I am not greatly struck with the Millais collection. The 'Child of the Regiment' is, I think, his prettiest: it is a little dot lying asleep on an old monument with a

soldier's cloak thrown over him, but there is a feeling of insecurity in the position which makes one uncomfortable. There is a nice Landseer of a Newfoundland dog saving a child; but there is no Herbert, no Maclise, no Cope, no Dyce (except a pencil drawing), no Richmond, and no Eastlake. There is also no Knight, which surprised me. Our little men look very nice" (a portrait of his two eldest sons), "and Mr Moore has improved the background; but there are two pictures of his without any background at all, which are far better, and I think he would do well to stick to that style. There is a picture of Lady Portsmouth, which I don't think nice enough for her, but it is like, and is thought very handsome."

"DEVONSHIRE PLACE, *May* 24, 1856.

"I went with Mary yesterday to see the French Exhibition, which is rather interesting, though my anti-Gallican eye does not easily accommodate itself to their style of colouring. There is a most spirited sketch of a peasant and ox by Rosa Bonheur, and a good cattle-piece by Auguste Bonheur; a fine painting by Ary Scheffer of 'Les trois Maries,' in which the Virgin is very striking, and the representation rather novel; and several pictures of less note which are well worth looking at. About half the pictures represent ladies at their toilet; and it is a remarkable circumstance that all the children in every picture are dressed in night-gowns and nothing else."

On June 9, Sir Stafford came up from the country in time to vote "against the Jew Bill." Many of his friends, who had come up by the same train, but did not expect a division till night, were unable to oppose the scheme for admitting the Hebrew into Parliament. "We were beaten of course," says Sir Stafford, probably without much regret. Another move in the political game, whereby the Peelites were expected to aid the Derbyites to discomfit Lord Palmerston's Government, is thus described: "Moreover, the time is an interesting one, and I don't like being out of the way without necessity, as there is no saying what may turn up. The Peelites feel very strongly on the American question, and there is, I fancy, complete harmony between them and the leaders of the Opposition on the subject. Mr Baillie has been in communication with Gladstone, and has entirely altered his motion for Thursday—in fact, it now looks to me as if Gladstone had drawn it up for him. It is very skilfully worded, and I do not see how the Government are to resist it. In the meantime Lord John, with his usual dodginess, is going to make some kind of move on Monday, thus cutting in before Baillie; but whether it is to be a move to help the Government, or to damage them, no mortal can say. I don't venture to speculate upon what may turn up; and there is always Lord Palmerston's wonderful luck to be taken into account, as well as the certainty that if our stupid people can by any ingenuity make a blunder, they will manage to do it."

Sir Stafford says: "I confess I am not very anxious for

a change of Ministry if they can get well out of this difficulty" (with America, about recruiting), "and escape a war; but the Peelites are very anxious to have the attempt made. Meanwhile the reconstruction of the Conservative party goes on at about the pace of the Tertiary formation," a somewhat "parliamentary" rate of progress, like that of Mark Twain's glacier.

The session of 1856 ended, and Sir Stafford was occupied a good deal with conferences on the reformatory schemes at Bristol, where Miss Mary Carpenter was in her native element. But those duties and the pleasures of the country did not prevent him from considering seriously his own rather isolated political position. He consulted Mr Gladstone, who answered in a letter of October 9, 1856—a letter which, perhaps, contained no very positive advice. That kind of counsel is at all times difficult to impart—*candidus imperti*, people say, and do not always care to act on the candid advice when they have received it. "As a delicate and scrupulous conscience has led you to seek for aid," says Mr Gladstone, "I sincerely wish that I could render it in full. I will cheerfully do the little I can, but it is very little." The condition of public affairs, as Mr Gladstone remarked, "was anomalous and disjointed." Between Palmerstonians, Derbyites, Peelites, there were none of the differences which now divide the parties of revolution, of resistance, of shilly-shally. Sir Stafford had first to reckon in his inner *forum* with Lord Ward, who was practically his constituency. Mr Gladstone kindly undertook to make

known to Lord Ward Sir Stafford's doubts and scruples. He conceived that Sir Stafford should attempt to secure a county seat. "Your natural place, I think, will ultimately be found in the agricultural part of the representation." Of course if he sought a county seat, Sir Stafford's difficulties about Lord Ward would be ended in the proverbial way—*solvitur ambulando*, by walking off from Dudley. As to the general question, Mr Gladstone thought that independent men, acting under independent heads, might preserve "the old stable elements of the House of Commons." "Of one thing I feel quite sure: the *worst* solution of your difficulties would be the one that perhaps you feel the least burdensome—I mean your quitting Parliament altogether."

Early in 1857, Sir Stafford Northcote wrote (January 30) that there was a rumour of his intention to stand for North Devon, but that he thought his standing highly improbable. But the improbable was exactly what occurred. Sir Stafford had foreseen (what seems odd to think of now) a coalition between Mr Gladstone and Mr Disraeli as "a contingency by no means impossible, but very unpleasant to contemplate." Mr Gladstone was at the time "very angry with Lord Palmerston, and says his principal political object now is to turn out the Government. We are pretty sure to have some fun before long; I only trust it may not lead to a dissolution," which was not long delayed. The Budget was the question on which Mr Gladstone expected to beat the Government; and Sir Stafford writes that he himself has

consulted the card-oracle, and demonstrated "by two brilliant Patiences" the correctness of Mr Gladstone's forecast. But the cards and Mr Gladstone were mistaken. Lord Palmerston had a majority, "and I think he is set on his legs for a good while." But the end was coming. On February 27, Sir Stafford writes "that the Chinese case is a very bad one"—the "case" being our attack on Canton in reprisals for the Chinese behaviour to the celebrated lorcha Arrow. "There has seldom been," says Mr M'Carthy in his 'History of our Own Times,' "so flagrant and so inexcusable an example of high-handed lawlessness in the dealings of a strong with a weak people." Sir Stafford writes (February 28): "The case is a very bad one to appeal to the country upon, for nothing could be more monstrous than Sir J. Bowring's conduct and the Government approval of it. The British flag is rather too sacred an ensign to be made the cover of pirates and smugglers, and the instrument of wholesale murder, for the sake of gratifying Sir John Bowring's vanity, as it has lately been." He adds that "people are said to be getting uneasy about Mr Gladstone's health, think he is over-exciting himself, and will break down like Bright."

The Government was beaten on the Chinese question on March 3. And here occurred a test of the relations between Sir Stafford and Lord Ward. He writes: "You will see that the Government were beaten last night. I, of course, voted against them. But while they were in the last agonies, and every vote seemed of vital con-

sequence, I received a message, through one of their Whips, that Lord Ward wanted to see me. He told me that he had voted for the Government; that they had strongly pressed upon him the inconsistency of his supporting me against them; that my doing so in fact neutralised his political influence; and that, in short, he should take it as a great favour if I would leave the House without voting. If I decided that I could not do so, he said I must not be surprised that we should henceforth be less united than we had been. I had a little time to reflect, and I talked the matter over with Gladstone and Heathcote: they both took the same view as I did, that it was impossible for me at the last moment, after having fully made up my mind on the merits of the question, and let my opinion be known, to withdraw to please Lord Ward. Had I done so, I should have accepted the position of a mere tool, which would not suit me. I wrote to Lord Ward, telling him I could not do otherwise than vote, and that I felt that my connection with Dudley must terminate; that I recognised the awkwardness of his position, and would do whatever was most agreeable to him as regarded resigning, either immediately or at a general election. I have not heard from him yet, indeed I could not; but whatever he may wish, it will be impossible for me to stand again for Dudley. If there is no dissolution, I should like to stay in for the rest of this session and carry my bill; but probably there will be no such alternative. As to standing anywhere else, I can as yet form no decision; but I think, in the circum-

stances of our family and fortune, I must give up the idea. It will be no great loss to me, and I shall be quite content to subside into private life. However, it is a little premature to talk of these matters."

On the whole, though Lord Ward was still ready to support Sir Stafford at Dudley, Mr Gladstone advised him to stand for North Devon. Yet the advice was contingent on success in North Devon being tolerably certain. Finally, Sir Stafford determined that the Devonshire constituency would suit him best: he stood for it, and was defeated after a very expensive contest.

For more than a year after the North Devon election, Sir Stafford Northcote was absent from Parliament. The expenses of his candidature had been large, and, for purposes of economy, he and his family made France, as he says, their "adopted country." They took a house in the Rue de la Maison Verte, St Germain en Laye, for a year, from April 21. Here a sixth son was born, described by his father as "rather a pretty baby." They subsequently moved into Paris, where Sir Stafford made the acquaintance of M. Arsène Houssaye, who gave Lady Northcote a volume of his poems, and generally proved amiable and interesting. Sir Stafford acknowledged the *étrennes* offered to Lady Northcote in a copy of French verses. The prosody of French gave him more trouble than Latin elegiacs had ever done. At this time Sir Stafford made a study of French affairs, and collected the material used in his lecture on French administration. Several visits to England were made by Sir

Stafford; and on June 30, 1858, he writes to Lady Northcote: "I have had a curious sort of letter from Earle, saying Disraeli wishes to see me as soon as he can, and he hopes I shall suspend any decision till I have heard from himself the 'offer' which he has to make to me." It turned out that Mr Disraeli was to propose a seat for Stamford, and possibly a secretaryship of the Treasury to Sir Stafford. On this supposition, Sir Stafford writes an interesting letter to Lady Northcote, showing how his acceptance of the offer would affect his relations with Mr Disraeli and with Mr Gladstone:—

"I have seen Earle this morning, and am to see Disraeli at a quarter past five. If I have time, I will write you a line with the result of the interview. Stamford is the seat he means; and he thinks it possible he will offer the Secretaryship of the Treasury also. I shall certainly not accept the seat without the office. It would put us to all the inconveniences of parliamentary life, separation and expense, with nothing in return; and I should also mark myself as Dizzy's man, and hold an uncomfortable dependent position in the House and lower myself out of it. But if he offers the office at the same time, the case will be very much altered, and I should only feel one difficulty in accepting the proposal, which is, that I fear it would be disagreeable to Gladstone. I would much rather give up all thoughts of Parliament and office than do anything that would give him the impression that I was deserting him. I mean to try and see him or Mrs Gladstone before seeing Disraeli, and to find out how he would

look on the matter. I should not myself consider that I was deserting him; because I have never followed him, and never mean to follow him in an anti-Conservative direction, and I have always desired, and still desire, that he should join the Government; and moreover, I should take care to let Disraeli know, if I do accept, that I shall never act against Gladstone in a personal question, should such arise. But my position with regard to Gladstone is a very awkward one; and I am afraid, if I take office, two things will be said, which might equally annoy him—one, that my doing so showed that he was favourable to the Government; the other, that it showed that I had deserted him for Dizzy. I don't fear any bad consequences to myself from joining on Dizzy's invitation. I should be abused a little, but that I don't care for; and I should always hold myself free to take an independent line if necessary."

It was not likely that Mr Gladstone would discourage a young, able, and ambitious member of Parliament from joining a Government to which he occasionally lent his own independent support, and on July 6 Sir Stafford writes, "Three cheers for Dizzy!" He had agreed to stand for Stamford, and was to have the Secretaryship to the Treasury if Mr Hamilton gave it up, or, failing that, was probably to have a place at the India Board. His first impressions of Mr Disraeli are amusing enough: "Dizzy talked as if he had always had my interests in the very centre of his heart," whereas, if one may say so, Mr Disraeli had previously dissembled his love. The

acquaintance between two men destined to be companions for life had been of the slightest. Sir Stafford goes on: "I only look upon my obligation to him as binding me to be personally civil to him, and not as committing me to him in the event of any great break-up. I have no doubt his object is to strengthen himself in the House by getting in men who will rather look up to and follow him, and who can make themselves useful in office on a pinch. After all, as he said to me, there is no gambling like politics. Isn't that a characteristic speech for him? But certainly when one looks to these sudden turns of luck one feels it to be true."

"I feel as if I were reading a novel about myself," Sir Stafford adds, "the whole thing is so queer." "Nothing could be tamer," he said, than the proceedings at his election. The immovable audience made him more nervous than "a good big crowd with cabbage-stalks and howls." He was quite devoid of physical nervousness. "A broken head is nothing to speak of," he remarked once, replying to the letter of a young lady who condoled with him on an accident. However, he was elected, if without the agreeable excitement of cabbage-stalks, and at once took his seat in the House of Commons.

Early in 1859, Sir Stafford Northcote was appointed Financial Secretary to the Treasury. "You will have seen my appointment announced in yesterday's 'Times,'" he writes on January 12, "which took us all by surprise when we took up the paper in the train. I have just seen Disraeli. . . . Dizzy says he looks upon the position of

the Government as difficult, but not dangerous." Referring to a criticism of himself in the 'Times,' he adds: "Isn't the 'Times' of to-day rich? I don't see my own sentimentality as strongly as they do." The comments of the press in general he found rather amusing. The 'Spectator' was "rather patronising." He soon began to be "less afraid of breaking down" under his new duties. "I expect that my relations with Disraeli will be very agreeable. He consults me upon a variety of matters connected with general politics, as well as upon strictly departmental business, and there is a great deal of the latter kind of work coming on which will be left pretty much in my hands." On January 21, Sir Stafford took his seat on the Treasury bench, and he sent Lady Northcote a list of his miscellaneous work. Here it is, miscellaneous enough in all conscience:—

"I took my seat at the Treasury yesterday. My first day's list of business shows how miscellaneous the work is. Here are some of the cases:—

"1. Expenses of Persian Embassy, how to be settled between us and East India Company.

"2. Distribution of Canton booty.

"3. New regulations as to the prepayment of letters in England.

"4. Establishment of money-order system with the colonies.

"5. Extension of the port of South Shields.

"6. Establishment of electric time signals at Edinburgh and Leith.

"7. Transfer of the pictures from Marlborough House to Kensington.

"8. Projected extension of Carlton House Terrace.

"9. Question of selling wine and spirits at theatres.

"10. A case of defalcation on the part of a registrar of a county court.

"11. Question as to assessing public buildings to the poor-rate, &c.

"So you see there is a pretty wide range of business. Well, I must wind up.—With lots of love to all, ever your."

At this time Mr Disraeli was in labour with that famed and ill-fated Reform Bill of the "lateral extension" and the "fancy qualifications." Of course the arrangement had no sincerity nor life. Were the working classes to be enfranchised? Was the constitution to become what it *has* become? Mr Disraeli knew that those things were written in the Sibyl's books, and wished, so to speak, to buy one small pamphlet, cheap, from that early publisher, the Sibyl. But his party would endure but a very small pamphlet; the Radicals, led by Mr Bright, were demanding a folio, and so that shifty and unsuccessful compromise was attempted, and failed. Sir Stafford wrote (Feb. 5), for Mr Disraeli, a long and closely reasoned note on the question, advocating a moderate measure of Reform, extension and amendment of the franchise, without redistribution. This "would not be absurd, coming from professed Conservatives." The document is too long to quote, nor did its mild wisdom save Mr Disraeli.

Mr Disraeli was defeated by a majority of thirty-nine. There was a dissolution, and a vote of want of confidence after the general election turned Lord Derby's party out. Lord Palmerston came in, with Mr Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Sir Stafford, never again to be found in the same political camp as his former chief, sat on the Opposition benches.

All times almost are stormy. Those days were full of fears of war. England distrusted Napoleon: he had gone to war "for an idea," and had made peace for a province. He had vanquished Austria and taken Savoy. Whom would he attack next, and what would he next annex? We are the Power most obnoxious to the assaults of ambition, for we have most to lose and least force to defend what we possess. Moreover, each party in turn is apt to be assailed by the other for incurring expenses that are onerous, but absolutely necessary, if we are not to live at the mercy of chance and France. From a letter of Sir Stafford's to Mr Disraeli, written shortly before they left office (May 5, 1859), we extract just enough to show how English Ministers are placed in this matter of national security and national expenditure, thanks to the system of party government, as it is often worked, which under our constitution makes English financiers resort to the devices of Mr Micawber:—

"The real question therefore, for you to consider, is one of policy.

"It is, of course, essential to put the defences of the country in such a state that we may be able to resist

an attack at any time at which it is likely to be made upon us.

"It is almost equally important to husband our resources by not incurring any expenditure prematurely and unnecessarily. It is within the power of any one to form a judgment as to the importance of undertaking these works of defence which will be of permanent utility, and which cannot be executed in a hurry; but it is only the Cabinet that can judge whether the circumstances of the time are such as to require the immediate expenditure involved in keeping on foot a large number of soldiers, and in taking steps for the preparation of a siege-train and other means of offence.

"The Supplementary War Estimates include a sum of £420,000 for the maintenance under arms of a considerable number of militia, whom it was previously intended to disembody as soon as the Indian troops arrived. Now, if immediate hostilities are apprehended, nothing can be more proper than to keep these men together. But if that is not the case, it becomes a question whether there is a necessity for this expenditure. It is not like spending that sum on building ships or fortifications, which if not wanted this year may be wanted next, and which are something to show for your money.

"If you keep these men embodied for a twelvemonth, and do not require their services, it is so much money lost. Again, if you put off your ships and your fortifications, thinking they will not be wanted just yet, and a sudden emergency arises, you cannot supply them in a moment, and

the consequences of delaying the expenditure are serious; but if you disembody your militia, and then find matters assuming a threatening aspect, you can, if you please, call them together in a very few weeks, and they will be *almost* as efficient as if you had kept them embodied.

"I am quite aware that to disembody militia at this time would raise some comment. But if it is the policy of the Government to make a display of neutrality, and to convince the people of this country that there is no intention to plunge them into a war, it might be well to have the disembodiment of the militia to set against the increase of the navy, the preparation of warlike stores, and the encouragement of Volunteers.

"I do not know that there is any use in my adding anything as to the Budget. There can be no doubt of our being able to raise the largest sum which has yet been suggested as likely to be needed for our expenditure; and the country will back you up if you show that what you ask is really wanted. Probably, therefore, it is best absolutely to settle how much you want before considering the way of raising it."

"The country will back you up if you show that what you ask is really wanted." Perhaps; but the Opposition is always ready to show that nothing is really wanted. These gloomy reflections are habitual and familiar. But Sir Stafford (May 6, 1859) "found Dizzy in capital spirits; but with a deficit of £4,000,000 staring us in the face. I don't feel as jolly as he does, nor can I take his sanguine view of our parliamentary prospects."

The sanguine views were not accurate, and Lord Palmerston came in with a strong Government and an unenviable state of foreign affairs. About the French Emperor, as usual, men thought—

> "We have a very great ally,
> But only the devil knows what he means."

European affairs were left unsettled by the Peace of Villafranca; in America the first murmurs of the Secession were audible; at home the Volunteers were replying to the Laureate's invitation to "Form"; meanwhile the Government promised to remodel the Customs, to repeal the Paper Duty, and to bring in a Reform Bill.

Among Sir Stafford's correspondence at this time one finds nothing more notable than the following line from Mr Gladstone (July 25): "I endeavoured to arrest your progress by a prolonged shaking of the head" (Sir Stafford had been speaking on finance in the House), "which you probably took for a mere denial of the fact, but which was intended to intimate that references from the Opposition bench to opinions of the permanent officers of Government, in contradiction to the opinion of the Minister who is responsible in the matter at issue, were contrary to rule and to convenience." Did Lord Burleigh ever say so much in one nod?

In the recess, Sir Stafford visited Lord Derby at Knowsley. About one interesting member of the party there he writes to Lady Northcote: "Mrs Disraeli is great fun, and we made capital friends in the train, though I could

not help occasionally pitying her husband for the startling effect her natural speeches must have upon the ears of his great friends. Still there is something very warm and good in her manner, which makes one forgive a few oddities. She informed me she was born in Brampford Speke, and I told her they must come and see her birthplace some time when they are in Devonshire. What do you say to the idea of asking them to Pynes? It would complete the astonishment of our neighbours."

When business began again, we find him giving to Mr Disraeli the following account of the "situation":—

"From what I gather, the Russell section in the Cabinet have triumphed, and we are to have £10 for counties, £6 rental for boroughs, but very little disfranchisement, and I suppose no ballot. There seems to be a good deal of doubt whether the £6 will go down, and a general expectation among our friends that we shall make a stand either for £8, or for a rating franchise. I hope it may be for the latter. No doubt it will lead to inequalities; but they are such as will correct themselves, and the operation of the measure would be to produce a fairer system of rating throughout the country. It is, indeed, a critical time for us in every way; and there will be a great need of sagacity in laying down the line of policy for the Conservatives, and of firmness in adhering to it. There is an apparent vacillation in Napoleon's proceedings, which is very unsatisfactory, and renders it difficult to steer between the risks of quarrelling with him and of being led by him into most embarrassing relations with other States. Is he

really as strong as he seems? and is he pursuing a determined policy, or fishing for one from day to day? I own to having great doubts about him, and to being very desirous to give him as wide a berth as possible. I don't see how he is to get handsomely out of his Roman difficulty. If the Pope is resolved to stand firm and to oppose a passive resistance to the secession of his States, I fancy he will cause the Emperor as much trouble as somebody or something is causing him with respect to his free-trade measures, and that we shall see postponements to July 1861, and protective duties, and consultations with eminent manufacturers imported into foreign policy. It looks as if the Emperor, after playing a game to make France paramount in Europe, ran some considerable risk of isolating her. If it is true that Austria and Russia are drawing together against him, and if Prussia looks on him, as I suppose she does, with jealous suspicion, the English alliance is his only hope, and this sudden tacking in our direction looks as if he thought so too. Then are we two to fight it out against the rest? Or if not, is the Emperor to be made to 'eat dirt,' and to treasure up wrath against England for letting it be so? Are we to encourage him to a certain point, and then to leave him in the lurch; or are we to go on so far as to find ourselves in another Crimean war of more formidable dimensions?

"I don't like the look of it at all."

"The look of it" was certainly not agreeable.

The tasks undertaken by Lord Palmerston's Government were not inconsiderable. They included "a re-

modelling of the Customs system, a repeal of the Paper Duties, and a Reform Bill."[1] In all these matters,—as in the French Commercial Treaty,—we are only concerned with Sir Stafford Northcote's action and opinions. He had become a member of the regular Opposition, and had now to learn the lesson which perhaps he never acquired very perfectly, that the first business of an Opposition is to oppose. As to the Commercial Treaty with France, Sir Stafford spoke his mind in the House of Commons on February 21, 1860. At that time many traders expected, from the example of the French Treaty, an era of general and profitable free trade. But in France free trade was initiated at the expense of freedom. The French did not want it, the will of the Emperor imposed it; it could not flourish. The bill, as a whole, had his approval; his criticism was expended on certain details, and on the management of taxation by which the treaty was to be set in motion. He "could not help remembering that even gold might be bought too dear," much more then light wine which claimed descent from the vineyards of the Garonne, but of which we may even perhaps say—

> "It didna grow on ony brae,
> Nor yet in ony sheugh."

We were possibly paying too dear for cheap claret, and we were imitating the Methuen Treaty, the horror of economists, when we let French wine in at 1s. and clapped eighteenpence on the sherry of Spain and the port of

[1] M'Carthy, iii. 95.

Lusitania. "On the whole, however, though the treaty did not give us all we wished, and all we had a right to expect, and although it contained a condition which would be embarrassing to us, he was free to admit that it made a breach in the French system of prohibition which might be attended with most important consequences. If, then, he felt obliged to oppose the whole scheme, it was not because he undervalued the advantages of it, but that he objected to the price we were called upon to pay for it."

Then a touch of literary criticism came in: a member had spoken of Mr Gladstone's "simple eloquence." Now, said Sir Stafford, "the eloquence of the right hon. gentleman nobody ever doubted, but that its characteristic was *simplicity*, he was hardly prepared to admit." The eloquence, in fact, simplified matters, he thought, by a course of economy or suppression. If Mr Gladstone was right in his calculations, we were paying, not a penny (on the income-tax), but a more considerable sum—threepence. It was proposed to abolish the paper tax—and he was not defending the paper duty,—but, with that abolished, and Customs reduced, where was the money to come from? The more light claret we drank, the less malt and hops would aid the financier. Was it proposed to diminish the expenditure on national defence, and that in perilous times? No doubt Mr Bright would "be delighted" by that expedient, and a reformed House of Commons, elected under his "exciting eloquence," would be delighted too, and would enjoy taxing property. "They were running the risk of a reckless onslaught on the

national establishments, by which the country might be exposed to great dangers, and thus a measure of economy might ultimately prove a measure of great extravagance; or they ran the risk of having a tax laid exclusively on realised property, from which the capital of the rich traders and manufacturers, who reaped the most advantage from free trade, would be specially exempted." On the whole, the treaty, though in many ways a good treaty, was "exposing the country to serious risks." Another objection to the treaty taken by Sir Stafford (March 8, 1860), aimed at a clause which provided for export of coal to France (clearly for the use of the French navy), free of duty. "We had been, he would not say entrapped, but induced by France to accept this clause for her own particular objects." Corks, as well as coal, attracted his attention. Mr Gladstone, for whom he "really blushed," had proposed a differential duty in favour of French corks. Where was free trade?

In Sir Stafford's 'Twenty Years of Financial Policy' (p. 357), he remarks that "the actual result of the year was even more unfavourable than Mr Gladstone had anticipated." The deficiency, instead of being £1,280,000, proved to be £2,558,385, or, in round figures, £2,550,000. The satisfaction of having prophesied not incorrectly may therefore have cheered Sir Stafford.

On May 8, Sir Stafford moved an amendment to Mr Gladstone's motion on the Paper Duties, that "the present state of the finances of the country renders it undesirable to proceed further with the repeal of the

Excise duty on paper." The propriety of retaining this duty need not now be argued. As long as a Government could do so, it would naturally oppose unfriendly prints in every way, or, in the opposite phrase, it would suppress the popular voice, "tax knowledge," and stifle the demand for justice. But when a national Government can no longer keep a tight hold of the reins, the hold is relaxed, and every one may now decide for himself whether the prophets were wrong who foretold that cheap papers might be nasty papers; not that expensive papers are necessarily models of what is chivalrous and in good taste. The happiest country that the world ever saw, the Empire of the Incas, was based on popular ignorance. We cannot go back to the Peruvian *Quipus;* the world will read; and we must see how and when general knowledge will justify itself. In speaking to his amendment of May 8, however, Sir Stafford Northcote did not discuss the general subject. He treated the bill in its financial aspect, and here even his opponents would probably admit that he was right. He wanted the Estimates to be fully discussed before the measure. "The Budget was announced before a single estimate was produced." "For his own part," he says, "I do not intend to maintain that the paper duty is a good duty, nor do I in any way dispute the case which my right hon. friend (Mr Gladstone) has made against it." In short, Sir Stafford was not—he never was—a sound obscurantist Tory. No doubt he foresaw, as clearly as any man then foresaw, as clearly as any man sees now, the consequences that a cheap press must bring; but

he also saw the inevitable arguments which inflict themselves on statesmen in a free country. He fell back on a conscientious argument for delay. "We are now sacrificing a large and important portion of indirect taxation" (about a million), "without having previously settled the principles upon which the direct taxation to be substituted is to be placed. I do not wish to be understood as saying that I object to the substitution in a proper way of direct for indirect taxation. What I mean is this, that we ought to take very good care to make direct taxation as free as possible from objection, and to put it in such a shape that when we strike away indirect taxation, we may be in a position to fall back on direct taxation, with the certainty that it will not fail us in consequence of the objections which it will engender. This is the point in which the scheme of the Government fails. Is it prudent to strike away indirect taxation, when we have in its place only the income-tax, which high authorities tell us is unsuitable as a permanent source of revenue, and when no one can assure us that it can in any way be altered or improved?" A deficit would be accumulated for next year. Then, going into figures, Sir Stafford alleged that half the estimated surplus had vanished.

He asked the House not to condemn the principle of the bill; but, in face of the financial condition of affairs, to refuse its assent to the bill for the present. He declined, again and again, to discuss the merits of the bill. His argument was purely and soberly financial. It did

not call for eloquence: the other side had adequate opportunities for eloquence, "simple" or subtle.

The argument, clear, plain, and practically unanswerable financially, had its effect. The second reading of the bill had been carried by 53. On May 9, the third reading was only carried by a majority of 9, the Opposition having an access of 18 votes, while the Government had lost 26.

The bill was ultimately thrown out by the House of Lords.

Writing to Lady Northcote after the withdrawal of the abortive Reform Bill, which the Government had introduced in the course of the session, Sir Stafford says, "The Reform Bill was withdrawn last night in solemn silence. I don't much expect another." Sir Stafford adds: "It is difficult to believe in Gladstone's assenting to the large expense which is to be incurred for fortifications and the Chinese war, and I shall not be in the least surprised if he and Milner Gibson go out."

The session ended, and both politicians remained in.

At the end of the session, Sir Stafford went cruising in a yacht, the Czarina (Sir George Stucley), and "enjoyed the life beyond measure, not being in the least sick." "One can do with much less room than one thought possible, and I am satisfied that Cardinal Balue must have been very comfortable.[1] Artificial milk is not a bit better than natural milk, if so good. There are people

[1] Students whose historical tastes have led them to see M. Coquelin in "Gringoire," or who have read 'Quentin Durward,' will remember how pleased Louis XI. is, at shutting up Cardinal Balue in an iron cage.

capable of putting to sea for many days, without a pack of Patience cards, box of letters, chess-board, or solitaire."

Sir Stafford's was one of those active minds which, in repose, are active still, and disport themselves in sports which people who are active too, but in a different way, find laborious. *Patience* was always a joy of his,—by this art he discovered that "the Prince Imperial will come to the throne of France,"—and the spelling game was a treasure of entertainment. It is improbable that *the Royal clemency* (as in Prince Bulbo's case) provided Cardinal Balue with a pack of *Patience* cards. The Czarina pottered happily about the lazy Scheldt and the Dutch coast, while her passengers "found their chief resource in singing nigger melodies," with an occasional chorus of sailors, to the surprise of the neighbouring mariners. *Vogue la galère!* income-taxes and paper duties ceased to trouble for a season. Ghent and Antwerp were visited, but the weather prevented a trip to Waterloo. "So the summer ended," as Thucydides says, and winter drew on, with Christmas festivities at Pynes.

The session of 1861 promised to present Lord Palmerston's Government with financial troubles. "There will be in any case plenty of difficulty with the finances this year," Sir Stafford wrote to Mr Disraeli (January 19, 1861), "and if Bright is as keen about the repeal of the paper duty as he is reported to be, the Government will find themselves in trouble." As to the paper duty, he stated his belief in a paper, showing why, the House having upheld the principles of the Budget, "we ought not to

oppose the repeal of the paper duty as a separate measure" (March 10, 1861); "we shall irritate the opponents of direct taxation by taking our stand on an unpopular tax, and one which cannot, in the nature of things, be long maintained." He was disposed "to make a general protest against the improvidence of the whole Budget, but to leave the responsibility of its details to the Government." He worked out, for Mr Disraeli, "a bit of prospective finance," anticipating deficiency.

On April 19 he writes to Lady Northcote: "Our little Budget storm is brewing in a promising manner, and, I think, will be a serious one by this day week. Disraeli is in the highest spirits because the battle is to be fought by tactics and not by brute force, and he thinks he is going to display great powers of generalship. I am always a little afraid of his manœuvring, especially when he has a good game, because he always spoils it by overdoing something or other. However, I so far sympathise with him as to feel as if I had just settled down to an interesting novel (not the 'Heir of Redclyffe'), and knew that I had a treat in store, and was wondering what the *dénouement* would be."

The practical political novels of that date were more akin to the 'Heir of Redclyffe' than to our violent romances of affairs, which he did not live to read.

To us, accustomed to far more violent debates on matters that strike nearer home, these old discussions of old Budgets may seem obsolete, so familiar that they are half forgotten. The gist of them, however, was

serious, and the real question at issue was who should pay the taxes. Was "realised property" to bear almost all the burden? was indirect taxation to disappear? and how was direct taxation to be organised? On what footing was the income-tax to be placed? for the dream of its disappearance could allure no responsible man. These momentous questions were clearly apprehended by Sir Stafford. In a speech of May 16, 1861, he argued for a permanent system of taxation, not a hand-to-mouth policy from year to year. "Every year that the question of the amount of the income-tax was renewed, and the question whether the working classes should be subjected to taxation on articles of comfort and necessity, *they revived a war of classes*. . . . It was most dangerous to leave all these matters open questions. . . . There were most serious risks incurred by voting the taxation annually, instead of fixing it for a term of years." He objected to "the system of making all the taxation annual, instead of permanent, making their finance provisional and shifting, and introducing a system that must raise questions between class and class in the most inconvenient form." But this is anticipating the order of his speeches.

In his speech on Ways and Means (April 22), Sir Stafford had the opportunity of showing that his predictions of deficiency uttered in 1860 were not incorrect. "The calculations made on the Opposition side of the House had been justified almost to the letter. They had said that the provision made by the financial arrange-

ments of last year was insufficient, and it had not proved sufficient." However, he congratulated Mr Gladstone on the results of the French Treaty. On the whole, the hand-to-mouth system of taxation was what he chiefly objected to. "He held that they ought to maintain their revenue and expenditure on as equal a footing as possible, and reserve those taxes which were their only resort in time of need till their necessities compelled them to fall back on them." Mr Gladstone, defending his surplus, denounced the prophets of evil. Sir Stafford interrupted, "There is a deficiency now of £8,500,000;" to which Mr Gladstone replied, "My honourable friend should not play on words." Indeed, for that time, the debate was rather personal. Mr Gladstone somewhat disdained "the honourable member for Stamford," and "flew at still higher game," "the great authorities of the party,"—Lord Monteagle ("A ridiculous point," said Mr Disraeli later) and Lord Derby. The expected deficiency would only be a deficiency if the income-tax were not renewed. It is needless to pursue the debate into chicory. Sir Stafford had written (April 29) to Mr Disraeli: "I am horribly afraid of moving an amendment in the resolution itself. Gladstone may bring up an array of figures to show that we shall upset the finance of the country, and may carry off a number of votes."

The great dispute was between the claims of sugar and tea on one hand, and of paper on the other, to be free from duty. Mr Horsfall moved the amendment in favour of tea and sugar. Sir Stafford (May 2) still disbelieved

in Mr Gladstone's argument for the existence of a surplus. His whole argument may be briefly stated, as it was by this effort that Sir Stafford made his first deep impression on the House, and justified the confidence and the applause of his party leaders. He denied the existence of the surplus, he denied that his denial was a "playing upon words," he asserted that there did not exist any surplus, but that a surplus had to be made. The question was not, "Which of two taxes" (paper or sugar and tea) "will you remit?" but, Will you put on one tax that you may remit another. Twopence was practically being added to the duty legally leviable on tea, "and this, not to cover the necessary demands of the year, but to make up an excess over these demands, in order that a certain other duty" (on paper) "might be taken off." He argued on grounds (1) of general policy; (2) of good faith—including the question as to the honour of the House in relation to the House of Lords, which had thrown out the bill remitting the paper tax; and last, he touched the financial grounds of the proposal.

First, the reduction in Customs duties, Mr Gladstone's object, was countered by the ideas of Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert wished, in 1845, when he had a surplus, to reduce taxation on articles of general consumption. Tea and sugar were among these: Mr Gladstone was postponing their deliverance to that of paper. Again, Mr Gladstone had argued that, not the English tea-drinker but the foreign, the Chinese tea-producer, would benefit by Mr Horsfall's amendment, or at least, that the

Chinese would benefit first. That sounded like protectionist heresy in a free-trade mouth, "It sounded very strangely when it came from his right honourable friend." "He surely did not need to remind his right honourable friend, . . . that our exports depended on our imports." The more tea we drank, the more our cottons, calicoes, razors, and so on, would be in demand. They were thus defending the general interests of the country, not the narrow and limited interests of the English tea-drinker. "They were bound to consider whether, in benefiting trade and manufactures, they were also conferring a real and general benefit on the consumer of the necessaries of life." It was the turn of the working classes rather than of the manufacturer. But, of the two, the manufacturer would benefit by taxing tea rather than paper. The working classes were practically unrepresented; as the Reform Bill had failed, "they were excluded from the suffrage. . . . The working classes could only petition, and when they did so, they were told that their petitions were forged." Whether these arguments were intended as steps to a Tory Reform Bill does not appear; but they certainly sounded rather strange in the mouth of a Conservative orator. Mr Gladstone had argued that the middleman, the trader, would intercept all the benefit from a lower duty on tea and sugar. One had very little doubt that he *would*, the *bourgeois* usually does; but Sir Stafford found an "antiquated protectionism" in Mr Gladstone's opinion. If so, the protectionist has more in common with the

socialist than he supposes. As an argument *ad hominem*, Sir Stafford had perhaps rather the better of it, by quoting Mr Gladstone's speech of March 6, 1854.

Turning to "good faith," Sir Stafford maintained that the House was pledged to the working classes to reduce the tea and sugar duties, "at the earliest opportunity after the close of the war" — the Crimean war. That was a pledge prior to the pledge about paper. But was the honour of the House of Commons not more deeply pledged—to resist the House of Lords? *His* idea of honour was "the perfection of justice." The honour of his opponents was "the honour of the duellist, and not true honour." "The House of Lords had rejected the repeal of the paper duty last year, not on account of any love which they had for that duty beyond any other duty, but because they thought that sufficient provision had not been made for the wants of the financial year." "It was a severe rebuke, and a very just rebuke," to the Government. He could have understood the Government sending back the bill again and again to the House of Lords, but he could not understand the present petty course. He praised "the wise and magnanimous conduct of the House of Lords," and then there was a tumult of howls and cheers. But he reasserted that the Government's policy was one of "petty pique."

He now came to "the narrower but perhaps even more important question of finance." He utterly denied that, in the true sense, any surplus existed. Omitting here other details of figures, he made the remark that, as to the

payment of a million of Exchequer bonds falling due, "the Chancellor of the Exchequer had simply given the House to understand that he did not mean to condescend to the baseness of repayment." But, after Mr Gladstone's solemn adherence to his creed in the existence of a surplus, it would be "improper and even indecent" for the Opposition to deny this entity. Well, granting the surplus, what duties ought to be remitted? Those on tea, not those on paper. He had to accept, but could not understand Mr Gladstone's statement, that Mr Horsfall's amendment would involve a loss of £950,000 on the revenue. Here the "array of figures" can hardly be followed in a brief abstract; but "if trade would be paralysed because there was going to be a fall in duty," that misfortune would arrive, whether the fall was on tea or on paper. The difficulty was to prevent the middleman from getting the benefit, if they reduced by dribblets; the producer, if they reduced by a large amount, and stimulated demand beyond supply. But there was any amount of tea to be had. The Chinese markets had just been opened: the condition of the United States (the Rebellion, or Civil War, having commenced) was hostile to *their* demand for tea. He did not, he never did, defend the paper duties in themselves. "They had an ingenious Chancellor of the Exchequer, fertile in expedients; if he longed to slay that giant, the paper duty, let him choose some other weapon from his armoury for slaying it, rather than the war tax on tea. The poor were now appealing to them for relief." (Oh! oh!) He ended by repeating

(again in face of cries of "Oh! oh!") that he "did *not* love the paper duties."

The speech was very successful: unusually successful, —the real beginning of the speaker's career and of his importance in politics. Mr Disraeli said: "Never since I have had the honour of a seat in this House have I heard a question more completely or more fairly put before the House, supported by ampler knowledge, illustrated in a happier manner, and recommended for our consideration by reasoning more irresistible." Lord Palmerston said that Sir Stafford "had spoken with great ability, and in great detail." But when the question was put "that the word 'tea' stand part of the proposed resolution," the Government had a majority of 18, "a very small majority, as it is in its 'teens' it can hardly be called a majority at all," said Mr Disraeli, with a characteristic *calembour*.

Lord Derby wrote to congratulate Sir Stafford on his "powerful and brilliant speech," and "the readiness with which he replied to and destroyed the fallacies" of Mr Gladstone. "Stanley told me this morning that by your speech last night you had placed yourself in a position among our friends in the House of Commons second only to that of Mr Disraeli." Mrs Disraeli, in writing to Lady Northcote, said that Mr Disraeli considered the speech "one of the finest he had ever heard." Lord Stanley, in a letter of May 3, called it "the most complete parliamentary success that I have heard in the twelve years I have sat in the House. You are marked out for a Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer. The comment I heard from a competent judge was, 'It is Gladstone at his best, without Gladstone's temper.'" There was much happiness when all these messages of praise and thanks came in. Lady Iddesleigh remembers the morning as "perhaps the happiest in her life." The 'Times' reporter, sending down from the gallery to ask for notes, rather unconventionally directed his message to "The Orator of the Opposition bench." Some one made the neat quotation, with regard to Mr Gladstone—

> "Keen are his pangs, but keener far to feel
> He nursed the pinion which impelled the steel."

But, in spite of tradition, Mr Gladstone had not done very much for "the pinion." It had written his official letters for a short time. Sir Stafford was his secretary, not his pupil.

Among other results of this speech was probably Sir Stafford's book on 'Twenty Years of Financial Policy.' Writing to Mr Disraeli on October 31, 1861, he says: "Some booksellers have entrapped me into a promise to write an account of our financial policy, and have forthwith advertised the work, as if it existed anywhere else than in the world of shadows. I am therefore trying to make a start, but don't expect to do much down here, away from all books of reference. . . . I suppose that the process of composing the pemmican of such works as M. Block's [on Finance] must be good for a man who is trying to get up a subject, although no digestion with

which I am acquainted can assimilate the article when put before one to read."

Sir Stafford's book is, at least, remarkably excellent pemmican, and intelligible even to the novice in finance. But his conclusions, as to how the country stood after the years between 1841 and 1862, were not very cheerful —that is, for him, who became famous for thinking he "saw a bit of blue" in a dirty sky. The wealth of the country had increased, owing to the effects of steam and other mechanical "advantages." But the expenditure had kept pace with the gains, and we had been able to spend so much, by the use of that other mechanical advantage, the income-tax. "The removal of restrictions on expenditure has promoted expenditure." Our ordinary sources of revenue had not increased in anything like proportion to our expenses. We were constantly drawing on our reserve, the income-tax, "and it is a grave question whether this is to be regarded as a proof of financial strength." The Russian war altered everything for the worse, "infecting the whole nation, and not this nation only, but all Europe also, with ideas of extravagance." All parties were to blame, "and each may retort upon the other the arguments which any one may use." "Public spirit must take precedence of party spirit, and a general view of the policy most conducive to the interests of England must not be eclipsed by our attachment to particular theories and particular measures." And he sighs for an end of party and personal prejudices, and for hearty co-operation; but Zeus blew all the prayer, and not half

alone, as in the Iliad, into the empty winds. What would such a policy be? The book tells us what it was not, but ends before reaching a constructive theory. Near thirty years have passed since then, and it seems as if not counsel nor goodwill, but the crash of forces, as fatal and inevitable as any of nature's blind powers, must settle financial policy, and the social problems of which it is the expression.

The education of destitute children had always been a matter of chief interest to Sir Stafford, and very much of his time and energy was occupied, as has been shown, with reformatory schools. On May 28, 1861, he moved for a select committee on the subject. The children who were provided for neither by the reformatories, the industrial schools, nor the national schools, were the children for whom he spoke. A Royal Commission had just presented an elaborate report, but this part of the subject had, in his opinion, been left incomplete by the Commission. "He had heard it said that there was no such class" of children, which was merely a proof of the ignorance of the people who made that assertion. The children existed, their parents could not or would not assist them, and it was the part of the State to relieve a condition which sounded almost incredibly evil and neglected. The elements of knowledge, "and sound, moral, and religious education" were required. Neither the day schools, the industrial schools, nor the workhouse schools met the need. "Did any one believe that, because there was no place for those children in the official system, the class would therefore cease to exist, or that benevolent

persons would not endeavour to deal with them?" He entreated the House not to say, "Because there are difficulties in the way, we will throw the thing overboard." Mr Lowe agreed to his motion for a committee, with a slight change, which Sir Stafford accepted, in his wording; and Mr Lowe paid a compliment to his "great ability and candour." Sir Stafford's share in a debate on Civil Service examinations (June 21, 1861) was chiefly notable for his declaration that he was "a pledged competitionist," who saw "not the slightest inconvenience or danger in open competition," and who thought that some members disliked it "because it would deprive members of that House of the advantage of putting their friends and relatives into public offices. He believed that to be at the bottom of the whole thing."

Here his parliamentary activity for the session practically ends. The year left him on a much higher level of public esteem than it had found him. To some extent he was the lieutenant of Mr Disraeli, who wrote in September about affairs in the United States: "Our friend Jonathan seems in a pretty state; it is like the failure of some ancient house, one scarcely realises the enormous results. . . . 'Tis a privilege to live in such a pantomimic age of glittering illusion and startling surprises." This was quite in the spirit of Leo X., but even Mr Disraeli might have had enough of "startling surprises" by 1890. The house of Jonathan Brothers did *not* fail after all, and occupied more of attention than was agreeable in the next session. The vacation

saw Sir Stafford president of the Archæological Association, which met in Devonshire, and was entertained at Pynes. Sir Stafford was not, as he said, an expert in archæology, but he was invaluable as a host and a president. His time was a good deal occupied, during the vacation, with finance, and with the Public Schools Commission, of which he was a member. Mr Gladstone (Nov. 12, 1861) in a long letter expressed himself jealous of any invasion of modern languages which might displace classical culture, or any portion of it, "in minds capable of following that walk." "The whole method of dealing with them" (modern languages in general) "is quite alien from strict study," a remark certainly true, at least in that period; and probably no less true to-day.

The vacation was too busy, with all those matters, and with the book on 'Financial Policy,' for much diversion, Sir Stafford wrote that, being in town on October 8, he discontinued the 'Cornhill Magazine,' and "I have now been doing penance for my offence by sitting next Thackeray at dinner," at the Athenæum. One would commit a multitude of sins for the chance of such a penance; but of the two divisions of mankind, Sir Stafford was not a Thackerayan, but a Dickensite. Happy are they who can read the lessons in both churches!

CHAPTER VII.

IN PARLIAMENT, 1862-1865.

"THE PANTOMIMIC TIMES"—HIS VIEW OF THE AMERICAN WAR—MEETING OF PARLIAMENT—SPEECH ON THE DECLARATION OF PARIS—LETTER TO MR DISRAELI—ECONOMY—THE INCOME-TAX — CRITICISM OF MR GLADSTONE — FORTIFICATIONS — PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMMISSION—CRITICISM OF THE BUDGET—THE DANISH WAR—WORK IN PARLIAMENT — MR JOWETT'S SALARY—GARIBALDI—LETTER TO MR DISRAELI ON CHINA—CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY — HIGHCLERE —FOLK-LORE—ENDOWED SCHOOLS COMMISSION—MR GLADSTONE'S "DOWNWARD CAREER"—DISESTABLISHMENT—MURDER OF MR LINCOLN—THE OXFORD ELECTION—RETURNED AGAIN FOR STAMFORD—HAWARDEN — FRIENDSHIP WITH MR GLADSTONE—THE YEAR 1866—"STEALING THE LIBERALS' CLOTHES."

THE "pantomimic times" ran on with their "glittering illusions," and shifting costumes of black and red. The war between the Northern and Southern States threatened to drag England into it, as a sinking ship draws down a neighbouring vessel. As to Sir Stafford Northcote's feelings and sympathies in the unhappy strife of

brothers, I may be permitted to quote what his old friend, Lord Coleridge, has written :[1]—

One neutral observation I must be permitted to make ; neutral always, thank God, as far as party politics are concerned, but one which it was at one time rather dangerous to make ; dangerous I mean to one's personal comfort, if one made it in most social gatherings, whether in London or elsewhere. There was a time when, in the great American civil war, the sympathies of the English upper classes went with slavery, and when the North had scant justice and no mercy at their hands. I have myself seen that most distinguished man, Charles Francis Adams, subjected in society to treatment which, if he had resented it, might have seriously imperilled the relations of the two countries ; and which nothing but the wonderful self-command of a very strong man, and his resolute determination to stifle all personal feeling, and to consider himself only as the Minister of a great country, enabled him to treat, as he did, with mute disdain. But in this critical state of things in and out of Parliament, Mr Disraeli and Sir Stafford Northcote on one side, and the Duke of Argyll and Sir George Cornewall Lewis on the other, mainly contributed to keep this country neutral, and to save us from the ruinous mistake of taking part with the South. On this matter Sir Stafford Northcote thought with his usual clearness, but spoke with an energy not usual in so kind a man. I well remember his saying to me in this city [Exeter] that he hoped to live long enough to see a particular member of Mr Jefferson Davis's cabinet hanged for his treason ; and he added that he could not understand how any man could look without utter horror and loathing (they were his own words, not mine) at the prospect of a great empire founded upon slavery and committed to the maintenance of slavery as the very principle of its being. His calmness was not coldness or indifference, his gentleness was not weakness. Moral wrong (as he regarded it), oppression, cruelty, roused him to wrath and

[1] Macmillan's Magazine, January 1888.

indignation, the more striking from their contrast to his habitual serenity, the more impressive from the unexpected disclosure of those depths of feeling and emotion, the existence of which was generally concealed under the veil of his quiet self-control. I do not know, but I imagine that it was his strong sympathy with the Federal cause, and his sense of the reparation we owed to America, which led him to place his great abilities at the service of his country as one of the commissioners of the Treaty of Washington, though the treaty was negotiated by a Government to which he was politically opposed. And I can never forget the unbroken dignity with which he sustained remarks upon himself, and the spirit with which he repelled attacks upon the provisions of the treaty, made, I must say, with complete impartiality from both sides of the House of Commons.

There will be later opportunities of illustrating his mind on this matter.

Parliament met early in February. "Dizzy has set up a small peaked beard," Sir Stafford says, mentioning this historical event in a letter to Lady Northcote. "He was in high spirits. The Queen's Speech has less in it than usual, and I suppose there will be scarcely anything said to-night" (February 6, 1862), "except in the way of condolence. We are going to take quite the right line about America. The weak point in the Government proceedings seems to be the Mexican intervention." On March 15, he was consulting with Mr Disraeli about the debate on Mr Horsfall's resolution. The purpose of this resolution was to make Government pause and reflect on certain well-known articles (as to privateering, and the relation of the neutral flag to the hostile cargo it covered) in the Declaration of Paris. What came, or whether anything

came, of the Government's meditations, is not now apparent. The relations, however, of England with France and America, the effects on our commerce, fleet, empire, and national existence which naturally arose from the cotton blockade and the general disturbance, were most unhappy. Sir Stafford was anxious to follow Mr Cobden in the debate, "to some extent *answering* Cobden, so as to place ourselves on a different footing from that which he will probably take." But Mr Cobden was ill, and unable to speak, on the 17th of March. Sir Stafford agreed with Mr Horsfall that "the present state of the law is unsatisfactory and dangerous;" the law, that is, about private property at sea, neutral flags, and privateering. "I think it impossible to go back," he wrote, "and I attach no weight to the arguments I have yet heard against going forward. . . . I object to taking a decisive step in so important a matter without seeing my way clearly before me. That was the fault committed by Lord Palmerston in 1856"—the date of the Declaration of Paris. In fact, he was like the tailor in the old song quoted by Scott—

> "The tailor didna venture ben
> Until he kenned the way."

"Horsfall has gained by the present discussion all he can hope to gain at present. He has opened the eyes of the country."

Unluckily the eyes of the country often close again in slumber, or are directed elsewhere. Sir Stafford's own speech was extremely lucid and powerful, and perhaps the

eyes of the country were distended, as usual, by alarm. But they shut again—they always do shut—and happy-go-lucky remains the policy in matters essential to the life of England.

In his speech of March 17, Sir Stafford, following the Lord Advocate, uttered warnings not more fortunate than those of Priam's daughter. He objected to the notion that "vows made in peace will very likely be retracted in time of war." These vows and treaties were made in peace expressly to regulate the conduct of war when it arose. The root of this question was not humane sentiment, nor was it commercial interest only—it was the existence of our maritime power. The commercial marine would be destroyed by war waged under a treaty which might remove our carrying trade, and with it the nursery of our navy—the commercial marine—into the hands of neutral nations. We have no *inscription maritime* like France—no organised reserve of all able seamen. Were we deliberately purposing to repudiate the Declaration of Paris in war-time, or if we adhered to it, what was to become of our merchant navy? That was the dilemma. If in a war with France she transferred her commerce to neutral vessels, she with her system of *inscription maritime* would be none the worse; but "the effect on England would be ruinous," obviously. Again, the United States had not agreed to the treaty: they could not possibly afford to give up privateering. It was like asking a country with a small standing army to give up its Volunteers. In war with France, French goods could

be carried in American ships, and we could not touch them; if we did, we should have America on our hands as well as France. Or if we were at war with the States, could we seize French vessels carrying American goods? Plainly we could not. The affair is a "see-saw," as at whist, though Sir Stafford did not employ this illustration. "Was the noble Lord prepared to leave the matter to the chapter of accidents?" Again, "Could anything be more absurd than to justify maritime plundering by saying that it was less injurious than plunder by land, and yet to maintain that it was more efficacious in crippling an enemy?" The nations of the world were now united in commercial interest: "they could hardly attack it without raising a storm of indignation all over the world." He then considered—we all know the considerations—the extent of British trade, and the practical impossibility of defending it. The Alabama was to illustrate this presently by an expensive and dishonourable "object lesson." Our navy "ought to be stronger than all others which might come against us." We all know whether it is or not; but the history of England is written in that book of the Sibyl's which contains the Chapter of Accidents. If the old navy did the navy's work, the privateers did the rest. But we had barred privateers. He only hoped for Government's "anxious consideration"; and that valuable commodity, at least, can usually be obtained or promised. He ended by quoting Bailie Nicol Jarvie's father—"Never put your arm out further than you can draw it back again." Conse-

quently Mr Leveson Gower, who followed, "felt at a loss as to what was the real view of the hon. baronet." Mr Disraeli predicted what the end of all this kind of shilly-shally commercial philanthropy will be. "Some man of force will take advantage of a flourishing but dead community, which would then vanish with a rapidity which it is difficult now to conceive, and give place to a society established on very different principles from those which have now the ascendancy in the excellent town of Liverpool." While we were sacrificing everything to the accumulation of treasure, we must ultimately be the victims of some strong Power influenced by different principles from those which governed our system.

It is only a question of time.

The key to this important question is, of course, money, and to get money, taxation and the readiness to spend and be spent for England. But do we get money's worth for all we give? These are the matters on which Sir Stafford wrote to Mr Disraeli a letter so interesting historically, and because our relations to France have so sadly altered, that I venture to quote the whole of it:—

"42 HARLEY STREET, *April* 19, 1862.

"MY DEAR MR DISRAELI,—After thinking over our conversation of this morning, I am tempted to inflict a letter upon you, because I think one puts one's ideas to the test by trying how they look on paper. I think you ought not to let slip the opportunity afforded by the second reading of the Tax Bill.

"The course which the Government are taking, in embodying all taxation in a single bill, makes that bill the cardinal point upon which the whole policy of the country turns. When we are asked to assent to the second reading of a bill which grants more than twenty millions of taxes for a single year, we are bound to ask whether they are likely to be sufficient.

"You have already called attention to our financial position, and to the consequences of recent legislation. The answer given to you is, that the years through which we have been passing have been 'exceptional' years. That may or may not be a sufficient apology for the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but we have to consider much more important and broader questions than the question whether Gladstone has done the best that could have been done in the 'exceptional' circumstances in which he says he has been placed. We have to ask why the circumstances have been exceptional, and how long they are likely to continue exceptional, and whether anything can be done to rescue the country from this exceptional condition. What may be the consequences of an indefinite series of exceptional years it is hard to predict. One thing is clear, that the very best we can hope for is, an indefinite maintenance of war taxation, and an indefinite postponement of all measures for the reduction of our debt.

"But war taxation is becoming more and more oppressive, and ere long will lead to serious discontent. Hubbard's agitation for an alteration of the income-tax is an

indication of this discontent. His motion is unpractical, and he shrinks from grappling with the tax in Committee; but it is clear from his moving at all, and from the large amount of loose support which he receives, that the income-tax is galling the country. We hear less about the tea duties; but there can be no doubt that these also are curtailing the comforts of our people, and that just at a time when they are most in need of comfort. It is therefore our duty to see how we can get rid of this pressure of war taxation. Now, taxation depends upon expenditure. We must look therefore to expenditure and see how far it admits of reduction. In saying this, of course I refer mainly to that portion of our expenditure which is 'exceptional.' The civil expenditure cannot properly be called exceptional; it has undoubtedly increased largely, and perhaps too largely of late years. Something may be done by a rigorous economy, and by such a revision as a Government might possibly make; but after all, there is not much to be got out of this kind of reduction, not enough, at all events, to enable us to do what we want to do in the way of remitting taxation. We come then to the military expenditure, and this has now reached a point at which it is necessary for us to come to a decision whether this pitting of Armstrong against Cowper Coles, and Cowper Coles against Armstrong, is to go on for ever. There is no assignable limit to the progress of mechanical invention, and while we are stimulating such men as Whitworth to devote their minds to the study of the science of destruction, we may be quite sure that it

will go on advancing until we cry, Hold! The only possible solution of the question between guns and targets is the beefeater's solution of the difficulty in the 'Critic': 'In the Queen's name, drop your swords and daggers.' Well, if there is no natural limit to this competition, we are driven to ask Parliament—How long do you mean to go on in this way? and what are your objects? Are we arming for self-defence, or for the attainment of some object of material importance to the country, or in order that we may exercise a certain amount of influence in the councils of Europe?

"As regards self-defence, which it is undoubtedly the first duty of a Government to provide for, it is of two kinds: there is the general state of defensive preparation in which a nation ought at all times to be found; and there is the exceptional state of preparation which becomes necessary when it is expecting an attack. Are our present preparations of the first kind, or of the last? If of the first, we cannot say that they are exceptional, and we must make up our minds to continue to bear the burden they entail. But then it is necessary that we should seriously review our position, and accommodate our financial arrangements to the real state of things. To keep the income-tax upon its present footing in order to maintain the defences of the country in a normal condition, is utterly at variance with every rule of prudence. The income-tax is our reserve for a time of war, and to use it up in time of peace is to weaken one of the chief defences of the country in time of war. The case is still

worse if we not only use it up, but make it an instrument for destroying other sources of income. But perhaps we are spending exceptional sums upon our defences in anticipation of an attack. If so, from what quarter are we threatened? So far as we can see, nobody is threatening us at all, nor is there any apparent reason why anybody should threaten us. Of course it is possible that the Government may be pursuing a course of policy which may have a tendency to embroil us with some other Power; but nothing of the kind is put forward by them. They may say, however, that the world is in an uneasy state, that war may unexpectedly break out in some unexpected quarter, and that we may find ourselves forced to take part in it. This would be going a step beyond self-defence. No nation engaging in war with another nation would wantonly attack England and so bring her into the field: if we are to take part in a general war at all, it must be by our own choice, and for good and sufficient reasons. Here then, again, we come to the question—Are our preparations for war of a normal or of an exceptional character, and if of an exceptional character, what are the grounds for exceptional apprehensions?

"But then we come to the question of the influence of the country in the councils of Europe. Now the influence of England, standing alone, must always be considerable; but the influence of England and France, acting cordially together, will be not only considerable, but paramount. Why then should they not act cordially together? There is no material opposition of interests between them: on

the contrary, the true interest of each is that the other should be strong and prosperous. The one has just what the other wants. But they look at the questions of the day from different points of view, and will differ as to the line of policy which ought to be pursued. That is true; but it is no disadvantage, for it will ensure the full and careful consideration of great questions.

"No man can see both sides of a question with equal clearness; at least if he can, he will probably be unfit for action. What one wants is a friend who will look at the matter in a different light, and who will fairly take counsel with one as to the line to be followed. But to make this possible, the allies must lay aside their jealousy of one another.

"To be acting together, and at the same time to be arming against one another, is an absurdity; and observe how it weakens the influence of the united Powers. We should never have had the Russian war if Nicholas could have brought himself to believe that France and England would act cordially together against him. Why is it, again, that we find the Americans trying so hard to magnify the one country and to decry the other? Of course it is in the hope of sowing discord between us; and while we parade our distrust of each other, we invite other countries to try to sow discord.

"But can we trust France if we cease to arm against her? Must not we in prudence 'keep ourselves strong?' To these questions I reply—first, can France trust us? The position of France, and especially of the Emperor,

is one of much embarrassment. Are we not adding to that embarrassment?

"We mistrust the intentions of France, and are conscious that our own intentions are perfectly pure; but is not our conduct such as very naturally to induce France to mistrust us? and is it not conceivable that the intentions of France are as pure as our own? I think such an incident as that you mentioned this morning is enough to make the Emperor cry out, *La perfide Albion!* We say that he is always playing a game of his own; surely he may return the compliment, and with great show of reason. With regard to his game, he may fairly say that he has been compelled by the necessity of his position to do many things which he would not willingly have done, and which may have been displeasing to us; but that the reason has been that we have declined to act in concert with him, or to make sufficient allowance for his difficulties, and that at all events when we have been acting together he has never tried to trip us up.

"But, secondly, I admit that, whether we trust France or not, it is our business to keep ourselves strong; only I question whether throwing away large sums of money upon parade movements and costly armaments is the way to effect the object.

"We showed in the Russian war both our weakness and our strength. Our strength consisted in the elasticity of our resources, the temper of our people, the length of our purse, and our power of endurance. All these are

still unimpaired, and France knows, and Europe knows, that they are the true constituents of our greatness. Our weakness was shown in the confusion of our arrangements, the complexity of our military system, the want of military skill, or, at all events, the absence of the highest qualities in our commanders. No doubt these failings were remarked upon, and more than enough was made of them. But since that time we have shown in India, we have shown in China, and we have shown in our brush with the United States, that the lessons of the Crimea have not been lost on us. France knows, and Europe knows, that while the elements of our strength remain unimpaired, we have done much to purge ourselves of the elements of weakness. We have done enough to re-establish our reputation; now let us beware of undermining our true strength. Are not some of our military men a little like the stag in the fable, who thought his horns were everything and his legs nothing? They make a great deal of our display of military strength, and think us low peddling fellows when we talk of the cost. But if we ever have to put our strength out for a great contest, it is our financial superiority that will carry us through, if anything does.

"I come round, then, to these as the sentiments which I think should be expressed on the second reading of the Tax Bill: This scheme of taxation, to which you ask our assent, is only justifiable, if justifiable at all, in what you call exceptional years. This coming year, 1862-63, ought not to be an exceptional year in point of expenditure. If

you are pursuing a course of policy which makes exceptional policy necessary, you are pursuing a very wrong course, and one which, for anything we see, you will have great difficulty in justifying. We have voted your supplies, and we will not refuse you your ways and means, for to all appearances you will not have more than you want; but there is no reason why the Government should spend all that the House of Commons has given them the power to spend, and we call upon you at once to review your expenditure, and to begin forthwith upon those reductions which you alone are able to make without embarrassing the public service.

"The occasion seems to me one for a great statesmanlike speech, with as little as possible of personal attack. Personalities would engender personalities, and the real points would be obscured. Besides, it is most important that our own friends should see that we are not trying to get Cobden and Bright to join us in an onslaught on Lord Palmerston; but that we are delivering our testimony upon matters which we regard as of high national importance. I hope, if you get so far as this, you won't think me impertinent for saying this, and for speaking freely what comes up in my mind.

"Now, with regard to the order of proceeding, I cannot help thinking that if you could get Sir E. Lytton to begin, and were to reserve yourself till after Lord Palmerston had spoken, it would be the most effective arrangement. If Sir E. Lytton would not undertake it, then I think it would be best that you should yourself begin, and that

no reply to Lord Palmerston should be attempted, for he had better not be answered at all than answered badly. But I should above all things like to see the question opened by a broad, liberal, philosophical, and eloquent speech, such as Sir E. Lytton would make. I think he would bring out better than any man in the world the blessing to mankind of a true and hearty alliance between France and England, founded upon a cordial mutual understanding; and that he would have advantages in handling the Italian, and especially the Roman question, which no one else on our side would have. I don't remember the precise line of his speech at Hitchin in the autumn, but it was sufficiently cordial to the Italians to make it impossible for Lord Palmerston to treat him as an anti-Italian, and he would have all the advantages of the πίστις ἠθική in speaking, as I think he would speak, in favour of the French alliance as the policy most likely to do good to Italy herself.

"If he would undertake to speak, I would gladly help to get together any materials he might require for the financial part of his speech, which need not be very full of details. The outline of the financial question is broad and simple enough.

"I am sure you will be glad to see that there is an end to my letter after all, so I will only subscribe myself, yours very faithfully, STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE.

"The Right Honble. B. Disraeli, M.P."

As to the argument of "exceptional years," Sir Stafford

had already told the House (April 7) that, if I may put it so, for a year not to be exceptional was the exception. The war with Russia began this lean series of exceptional years; rivalry with France and the United States prolonged them. What general theory of policy existed? He objected that Mr Gladstone had tried to do in two years the work of ten. In fact, he seems continually to have regarded Mr Gladstone as "in a hurry," and "expecting all things in an hour;" and that, as far as I understand Sir Stafford's ultimate ideas, was the main difference between these two financiers. In writing to Mr Disraeli (April 25), during the Easter vacation, Sir Stafford gives, in a familiar shape, the gist of his opinions.

"The doctrines I should lay down are,—1st, that the income-tax ought not to be permanently retained as a portion of our ordinary taxation; 2d, that our ordinary revenue ought to be kept up to an amount fully sufficient to cover our ordinary expenditure; 3d, that we ought therefore to settle the scale of our ordinary expenditure as soon as may be, and then to adjust our ordinary taxation to it. This may probably involve the necessity of some addition to our direct taxation; but this is a step to which, if the income-tax were taken off, there would be no objection in principle, though the details would be difficult. 4th, I would say that I see no reason why we should not at once set about that which is the first step in the process—namely, the reduction of our expenditure towards its proper ordinary level. It is under this last head, of course, that any reference to foreign affairs would

naturally come. I am shy of attempting one, yet I think I might say as much as this, that the acknowledged policy of England is one of non-intervention; that of course this does not preclude us from offering our advice upon proper occasions, but that it is not necessary or right to attempt to give weight to that advice by a show of military preparation, unless we intend to follow it up by military action, in case the advice is rejected. Armed non-intervention is very liable to be misconstrued. We are all interested in the welfare of Italy; we all wish that she may enjoy that form of government which suits her best; and we must all rejoice when any nation of its own free-will adopts and successfully practises constitutional government.

"We cannot but be conscious of the great difficulties under which Italy labours, and, in particular, we cannot shut our eyes to the intricacy and importance of the problem presented to us at Rome. It is natural and right that, as a friend to all parties, we should give the best advice in our power to Italy, to France, to any other nation whose interests are involved in the settlement of the question. But we neutralise the effect of that advice if we awaken the jealousy of France by ostentatiously arming against her; and we should commit a crime against Italy if we were to lead her to take rash steps on the faith of a material assistance which we did not mean to give in her time of need. So, too, with the United States: it is most natural and proper that we should give our advice and use our influence to bring the

contest to an end, if we think we can do so with advantage; but we neutralise the influence we might expect to exercise if we show any indications of an intention to use force. If we mean to make a demand, and to insist upon compliance with it, by all means let us show our strength, as we did in the Trent affair. But do the Government contemplate anything of the kind? I apprehend not.

"I might add that in both these cases the real interests of France are identical with the real interests of England; that France and England, cordially acting together, might bring about the best solution of these questions; but that cordiality seems essential, and our policy in the matter of armaments indicates not cordiality but distrust.

"If I said anything like this, I should apologise for travelling out of my beat, and should return to the question of finance, pointing out the difference between Gladstone's language at Manchester and the language of Sir G. Lewis and Lord C. Paget in the House—he saying that it is perfectly easy to cut down expenditure, they virtually saying it is impossible — and I would urge the necessity of either accommodating our taxation to our expenditure, or our expenditure to our taxation, and, above all, of letting us know the truth as to the views of the Government.

"Perhaps you will think over the propriety of my saying as much as this.—Yours very faithfully,

"STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE."

In his speech of May 8, he repeated his objections to

voting the income-tax frequently at varying rates, and from year to year, and wished to be done with this provisional system. He reviewed Mr Gladstone's recent speech at Manchester, but did not persuade Mr Gladstone that the speech had been inconsistent with his remarks in the House of Commons. He attempted to put Mr Gladstone's utterances "into plain English"; but Mr Gladstone, in his reply, said that the plain English of Sir Stafford was not what he meant. "My English is my own child" (who ever thought his own child "plain"?), "and I greatly prefer it to the construction so liberally placed on it by my hon. friend. . . . He mutilates and mangles it so that I cannot recognise it."

Sir Stafford asked where was the financial reserve for war-time, which Peel had found in the income-tax. He criticised Mr Gladstone severely; but then, as Mr Gladstone denied that the criticism was applicable, we need scarcely stir the embers of this fiery logomachy. Time has thrown his dust on it, *pulveris exigui jactu.* Sir Stafford then touched on foreign affairs, repeating much of what he had written to Mr Disraeli. He saw nobody meditating an attack on England, no need for "exceptional preparations."

To tell the truth, the non-political mind gets perfectly sick of this see-saw. Almost every Government is aware that we simply must spend largely on warlike preparations to secure our national existence. Almost every Opposition sees no sort of need for the expenditure. Nobody knows how the money is to be got; everybody adopts the far-

sighted policy of the ostrich. However, Sir Stafford's moral that the "finances should be in a proper condition" is an undeniable moral, as is his advice that the expenditure should be made to go as far as possible.

Mr Gladstone was probably right when he answered that Sir Stafford was applauded "during nearly an hour of critical attack; but the ready cheers entirely failed him, and left him to ply his wings and oars as best he could without support, the moment he began to preach the unpopular doctrine of public economy."

These attacks and replies, the perpetual battledore of politics, do not make the most attractive reading when the occasion has gone by; but they constantly defer the necessary measures for the national needs, and honourable members take either part when they are out or in, as if they were playing at cricket.

In the debate on the Government demand for money to be spent on fortifications, Sir Stafford examined the financial aspect of the question. He objected to the mode of providing for such a large expenditure by way of loan, fixing the burden on posterity. It might, of course, be readily argued on the other side that posterity would have to pay in one shape or other—"in maut or in meal," as the Scotch saw runs. He thought Government would have made a more moderate demand and examined the matter with greater care had the money been raised by taxation. Then the battledore game was played again, Lord Palmerston observing that, two years before, Sir Stafford had adopted the view of the Government and

voted for a loan. Sir Stafford moved to insert in the bill a proviso that the money should not be applied to any work not specifically named in the schedule, nor to apply to any work any greater sum than was set down as the total estimated cost, with other expedients for keeping the scheme under the control of the House. With alterations suggested by Sir George Lewis, the proviso was agreed to.

The occasion, and Mr Bernal Osborne's opposition to the Government, gave birth to the following epigram of Sir Stafford's construction, which he sent (June 26) to Mr Disraeli. "How will the epigram do?

"Aeratos muros cum condimus aere alieno
Fronte tua magnum est, Bernale noster, opus."

Mr Osborne had denounced a "hobgoblin speech" in which the need of fortifications was asserted.

Sir Stafford took no other prominent share in the debates of the year. Indeed for three or four years afterwards he spoke little, and "only when he had something to say," being therefore regarded as a "business member."

The book on Financial Policy came out in August 1862, and produced a long criticism from Mr Gladstone, complimenting him on the skill with which he had composed an eminently readable book on a dry subject, and on his tact, good feeling, and love of truth. Mr Gladstone's letter is full of minute and most interesting criticism of details; but, on the whole, he agrees with Sir Stafford as to the increase of expenditure, and the dangers of "drawing on our reserve."

A considerable part of Sir Stafford's time and attention were now engaged by the Public Schools Commission, on the nine public schools of Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Charterhouse, St Paul's, Merchant Taylors', Harrow, Rugby, and Shrewsbury. The Earl of Clarendon, the Earl of Devon, Lord Lyttleton, Mr Thistleton, Mr William Hepworth Thompson, Henry Halford Vaughan, and Sir Stafford were the members. The schools were visited in 1862, and witnesses were examined till May 1863, the total number called being 130. The Commission met 127 times, and issued a long report in 1864. Mr Gladstone then observed, in the House (May 6, 1864), that he "did not think any more signal instance could be quoted of the devotion of public men to an inquiry involving innumerable difficulties than that of the Commissioners." Sir Stafford, in acknowledging these compliments, admitted that, to old public-schoolmen like himself, their task had been difficult and invidious. They had determined to hush up nothing, but probe it to the bottom. The schools had been attempting to move with the times, but they needed legislative help in adapting to the new needs the old machinery. Parliament, he held, should not attempt to deal with the subjects of study nor the management of the schools. They should deal with endowments, with the constitution of the governing bodies, and remove restrictions. "The English mind did not want *lycées* and *gymnasia*, but schools for the moral, physical, and intellectual training of boys between twelve and eighteen, which should make of these boys young men,

—men in every sense of the word. . . . Let the schools be set free and enabled to accommodate the new studies lately thrust upon them to the old learning, for the promotion of which they were founded." The scheme of the Government was that of which he and the other Commissioners approved. He discussed the question of bullying at Westminster, where the help of the House was needed, by reason of the insufficient accommodations, and insufficient provision of servants. "Westminster had disadvantages, and deserved to be treated tenderly."

An old Eton boy, it seems, had this loyalty towards an old opponent.

The end of January 1863 found Sir Stafford in town again. "I suppose some mischief is brewing, and I must go and help to throw in a few ingredients. I am getting into rather better spirits at the prospect of having a good row next week." Harmless mischief, urbane "row," of a quarter of a century since! He sketched the financial year for Mr Disraeli, "on very insufficient data." On April 17 he criticised the Budget, without any "hostile remarks"; but he thought Mr Gladstone had overestimated the Excise, as he had predicted. Mr Gladstone's "besetting sin" was to expect too much from spirits. The Budget, however, was "based upon the only true, wise, and safe basis of calculation for the reduction of taxation upon wise and broad reductions of expenditure." "He did not wish the Government to go faster than they had done, but he trusted they would not think they had quite reached the end of the policy

of reduction." He did not think that *all* the rags brought into the country were brought by the repeal of the paper duties. "They were extensively used in the manufacture of a material which was somewhat irreverently termed 'shoddy.'" He might have added that "the Liberal shepherds give a grosser name"—devil's dust! But he "expressed general approval."

His other speeches of the year were on matters long forgotten, and his correspondence is purely domestic, and contains nothing that need be lingered over.

The new year, 1864, began with apprehensions of war, which Sir Stafford thought we might be dragged into—the war between Denmark on one side, and Austria-Prussia on the other. The Queen was understood to be strongly opposed to war for Denmark; and a minority at least of the Cabinet, with the Tory leaders, was also anxious not to fight. On February 3, Sir Stafford writes from London to Lady Northcote:—

"Lord Stanhope told me yesterday that it was pretty certain that there were two parties in the Cabinet—the one headed by Lord Palmerston, which is strongly for war, the other by Gladstone, which is strongly for peace; and that Lord Russell had been one of the peace party, but had now gone over to the war party. If they cannot make up their differences, and any important member of the Cabinet on either side goes out, I think there can be no doubt but that they must break up. If the peace party give way, and they get the Queen's consent to go to war, they may possibly succeed in carrying a majority of the

House of Commons with them, for I am afraid there is a strong war feeling among our supporters; but the Queen is so set against the war, that encouraged as she will be by Lord Derby's and Disraeli's language to-morrow, I should think she would rather dismiss her Ministry and call in Lord Derby than give in. Besides, I cannot bring myself to believe that Gladstone will give way. The more likely alternative is, that the war party will be beaten, and that we shall have a peace Speech; in which case the Cabinet may live, though they will have to go through a great deal of humiliation. If they do take this line, Lord Russell will have to make up his mind to more and juster abuse than he has had to bear for a long time. Everybody says that the Queen's reception of Lord Derby the other day was most cordial. I have no doubt that she wishes him to take the Government; and I have not much fear of the result if he did so, as, although we have some strong Danish feeling in our party, I do not believe that the Conservatives as a body can wish to go to war with our old German allies, with France hanging on our flank, ready to play her own game on the Rhine as soon as England is fairly committed against Prussia. I believe that many difficulties, which are now insoluble, on account of the mess Johnny Russell has got into, might be got over by a new Ministry, and that we might succeed in bringing about a settlement which Austria, and probably Prussia too, must in their hearts desire.

"If Lord Palmerston were a younger man, and the peace party in the Cabinet consisted only of Gladstone

and Milner Gibson, I should think it possible that he might try to go on without them, and in defiance of our leaders, rallying to himself the Conservative warriors, and perhaps attracting some such men as Robert Cecil into his party; but I think he is too old to succeed in this sort of game now, besides that the Queen is too strongly against him, and Lord Russell too much damaged, for it to succeed. In any case, I expect if the Cabinet breaks up to see Gladstone and Milner Gibson go straight to the head of the Radicals, and probably give us their support for a time on questions of foreign policy."

After reading the Queen's Speech "at Dizzy's," who "has gout—a good omen for a future premier"—"we agreed that it was the most extraordinary production of the kind we had ever seen. It gives the go-by to all the difficult questions, and, as regards Schleswig-Holstein, amounts to a request that Parliament will direct the Government what line to take. The peace party have carried the Cabinet so far, and have obviously altered the speech; for the paragraphs about Denmark begin with an elaborate recital of the treaty of 1852, obviously laying the ground for an attack upon the German Powers who were parties to it and who have broken it, and then suddenly end by saying that her Majesty will continue to use her endeavours in the interest of peace, without giving the slightest hint of her being aware that peace has been broken, or that she has ever heard of the course pursued by Austria and Prussia. What the Government evidently wish is, that the Houses of Parliament should take the

initiative with some strong expression of feeling which may guide their policy. I hope they will be disappointed, and that we shall content ourselves with calling on them to explain their own views more particularly. I think, however, that there is now less chance of their breaking up than was supposed. They will submit to a good deal of humiliation, and go on for a time. But it is very uncertain whether they will last out the session."

Besides these preoccupations, the mechanical work before him was harassing. He was on committees of Public Accounts, Irish Taxation, and Schools of Art. He wanted no fighting in Parliament, or as little as might be; but Mr Disraeli was "blue-moulded for want of a bating."

"I am going to the *levée* presently, and then to a meeting at Lord Derby's, at which I mean to advocate prudent counsels and no fighting. I think, from what Dizzy said yesterday, that he will take the same line; but there is a pugnacity about him which alarms me. He was on the point of committing us to a battle on the malt tax, but I think I have stopped that. I told him we were waiting for an inheritance, and must take care not to lose it by attempting to seize it too soon. He wound up our conversation by saying that we must be very careful not to put the Government in a minority upon anything. They would be but too glad of a good excuse for dissolving while Lord Palmerston is at their head. However, we shall probably have some hot counsels this afternoon."

In an Oxford squabble of this date, Sir Stafford, as a

Balliol man, was on the right side. The clerical party were anxious to keep the salary of the Greek professor, Mr Jowett, at the medieval figure of £40, while all other similar salaries had been raised. Mr Jowett, no doubt, would have been "passing rich" even on that proverbial income, but justice was done. Sir Stafford says:—

"You will see in to-day's 'Times' a letter of mine about the Jowett vote. I am rather glad to have the opportunity of giving my reasons for the vote I should have given. Some of my friends (Lygon, &c.) are very indignant with me; and Palmer grinned much at what he evidently considered my rashness. I don't myself think it will do me any harm with reference even to a possible Oxford contest [he was thinking of standing for the University]; but I don't now look to or desire one, and am at any rate clear that it is for my true interest that my friends there should know exactly how far I do go and how far I do not go with them. Palmer's caution may get him into trouble hereafter."[1]

On April 11 was the Garibaldi procession, and Sir Stafford, amidst the cosmopolitan excitement, was engaged on the Schools of Art Committee. He *did*, however, view "the hero's back" (his enemies rarely saw it) "driving very fast in an open carriage along Pall Mall." He also had the honour of a short conversation with Garibaldi at one of Mrs Gladstone's evening parties. The 8th of July was an ill day for the Opposition, as an attempt to censure Government about the Danish war was

[1] March 2, 1864, 'Times.'

defeated, in spite of great hopes, by aid of Lord Palmerston's popularity, and it was an ill day for Sir Stafford, as Eton was defeated by Harrow, in an innings.[1] As to the division, "There are no end of stories of Lady Palmerston's and Mrs Gladstone's proceedings, under the excitement of alarm. As soon as the division was over, Lord Palmerston hurried up-stairs to the Ladies' Gallery, and met Lady Palmerston on the first landing, coming down. They threw themselves into one another's arms!"

Such is the lighter record of events, which he prepared for Lady Northcote, who was passing the summer in the country.

At this period of his parliamentary career it not unfrequently happened that Sir Stafford, instead of speaking on certain subjects in the House, stated his views in letters to Mr Disraeli. In those letters he could express himself with a freedom and succinctness which the forms and responsibilities of Parliament did not always permit, and thus it happens that these epistles contain the marrow of his political speculations. For example, on February 14, 1864, he writes from Pynes to Mr Disraeli on the great subjects which at that moment interested England, especially on our foreign policy. Not only were the affairs of Schleswig-Holstein, of Poland, of the States supremely important, but we were on the verge of Chinese entanglements. The Taeping Rebellion was at its height. We would say nothing against gallant men "justly struggling for free-

[1] Eton, 65, 112; Harrow, 240.

dom" against a "foreign dynasty," which had only been settled in China for two centuries and a half or so. Radical sentiment was naturally on the Taeping side: the Mantchu throne, like so many thrones, was "tottering"; GORDON had received a check, and had been wounded; our expedition to put down piracy, under Captain Sherard Osborn, had failed through Chinese jealousy; there were "atrocities" on both sides (as the Soochow massacre); our interests in the neighbourhood (thirty miles radius) of the Treaty Ports were threatened; Kagosima we had bombarded; and had England been the old England, it is extremely probable that some new Clive or Warren Hastings would have "saddled us with a new India," or "added a fresh and considerable jewel" (as you like to put it) to the English crown. But Gordon was not a Clive or a Warren Hastings, but the purest of men, and England and the world were not what they had been a hundred years before. It was in these circumstances, when Lord Palmerston was displaying the "old buccaneering temper," that Sir Stafford wrote the following letter to Mr Disraeli:—

"PYNES, EXETER, *Feb.* 18, 1864.

"MY DEAR MR DISRAELI,—I am quite conscious that a man who deliberately sits down to write a long letter on political questions raises against himself the presumption that there is something radically amiss in his mental composition; but I feel myself under the necessity of saying my say upon one or two matters, which appear

to me to be of vital importance at the present time, both to ourselves as a party, and still more to the general interests of the country.

"The point upon which I feel the greatest anxiety of all is, the line which we should take upon Liddell's motion with regard to China. The more I reflect upon the question he raises, the more strongly do I feel that it is the one above all others upon which it is nationally important that Parliament should pronounce a clear verdict, and upon which it is important for us as a party to take a bold, broad, and intelligible course, and to show that we are prepared to deal with it in the spirit of statesmen and not of partisan politicians.

"And the reason I take the liberty of writing to you now is, that I am anxious to bring under your consideration the propriety of holding a conference upon it, and, after clearly marking out our line, calling our friends together and explaining it to them.

"It seems to me that the present crisis is one which brings strongly into view the difficulties which arise in the conduct of our foreign affairs, generally from the constitutional relations between the Crown and Parliament.

"It belongs to Parliament, no doubt, to lay down the broad general outlines of the foreign policy of the country. It belongs also to Parliament to criticise the action of the Ministry when fully informed of it. But the difficulty of criticising, while our information is imperfect, and the uselessness of criticising after the event, detract seriously from the value of the parliamentary check, in

nine case out of ten which arise. Moreover, in regard to our European policy, I apprehend that we may consider that the great outlines of our course are already laid down, so that disputes which may arise will ordinarily turn upon questions of detail, questions of degree, questions of personal conduct, and so forth; and upon these we are embarrassed by the imperfection of our information, or by the personal and party feelings and recriminations which must be imported into our discussions. Again, in complicated and difficult questions like those of Schleswig and Poland, men who speak under a sense of responsibility and with the knowledge that they may be called upon to act, must necessarily speak with reserve and caution, and thus will often present to the world the appearance of being captious critics of others with no policy of their own.

"But the question raised with regard to China is one of a wholly different character from these European problems. We are not asked to criticise or pass censure, and though we may have to do so incidentally, I hope we shall keep as clear of all irritating topics as possible. What we are asked to do is to lay down the outlines of an imperial policy in the extreme East, for what we may decide upon in China cannot fail greatly to affect our future course in Japan also; and it strikes me that it is at once of paramount importance to England that those outlines should now be firmly traced, and of very great importance to ourselves as a party, that we should show ourselves capable of tracing them.

"I don't mean to put the two objects on a level; but I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that we suffer in public estimation from our apparent want of a policy of our own on some great national questions, and I cannot but look on this Eastern question as a great opportunity for us to come forward and set our policy against that of Lord Palmerston.

"The occasion is a peculiarly favourable one. There is no attack upon absent British officials, as in the Lorcha case or the Kagosima case; no risk of weakening our own friends and encouraging our enemies, no maudlin sympathy with barbarians against Englishmen, none of those topics of which Lord Palmerston was able to avail himself in 1857. It is not even a question whether we should draw back from a course to which we have pledged ourselves. Providentially, the failure of the Lay and Osborn expedition clears the ground for us, and leaves us free to choose our future course without a shade of reproach. At the same time, we have our warning written up in such plain characters that the blindest of us can hardly fail to read them. The rebuff to Osborn shows what we may expect if our officers are to be independent of Chinese authority; the Soochow massacre shows what will happen if they submit to it. We have at the same moment this almost unexampled conjunction of favourable conditions; practical examples illustrating the working of a policy, and perfect freedom from committal to that policy. No such conjuncture can be expected again.

"Individually, I should be disposed to condemn the policy which has led to the present state of things; but I see no reason why we should be severe upon it. There are men who wished well to Osborn's attempt, and who even thought that we were in a manner bound to repair the injury we had done to the Imperialist cause by our (very questionable) war with China, and who yet feel, now, that the experiment has failed, and need not, and indeed ought not, to be repeated or pursued further. It would, I think, well become us to take our stand on general grounds, to let bygones be bygones, except for the sake of the lessons they teach us, and to call upon Parliament to lay down now a clear and intelligible principle of strict non-intervention in the domestic troubles of Asiatic, as well as of European and American nations.

"We ought not to forget that the thoughtful men are becoming alarmed at the magnitude of our empire, and at the danger lest the pulsations of the heart should not be strong enough for the size of the frame. Neither ought we to forget the lesson which the growth of our Indian Empire should have taught us, of the certain consequences of intermeddling with the domestic concerns of semi-civilised or Asio-civilised (if I may coin such a word) nations. Nor ought we to shut our eyes to the risk we run in encouraging the strange buccaneering spirit, which is as characteristic of Englishmen now as in the days of Elizabeth, and which is compounded of love of gain, love of adventure, love of fighting, a certain kind of religious feeling, and a dominant con-

viction of the superiority of the English race to all foreigners, of whatsoever nation or colour. Those wild resolutions of Ferrand's have a vein of truth in them. There are English merchants who will go anywhere on the face of the globe to push their trade.

"Wherever an Englishman goes, he is perfectly convinced that his countrymen at home ought to go to war on his behalf rather than be insulted, as he calls it, in his person. We are therefore continually in a dilemma between submitting to an outrage and bombarding a Kagosima; and from such dilemmas we can hardly hope to free ourselves. But for heaven's sake do not let us add to our burdens the weight of the Chinese Empire, which it is as plain as Euclid that we shall do if we take upon ourselves the conduct of its civil wars. Think of the frightful position in which Lay and Osborn would have placed us. Osborn accepting orders through Lay alone; Lay conveying no orders of which he did not approve; Lay holding the purse-strings of the Custom-house; and both Lay and Osborn looking to the British Ambassador and the British Admiralty for counsel and support. And then imagine a collision between our adventurers and the Futai—a capitulation broken, a disgrace inflicted—and picture to yourself what must have been the result.

Surely it is high time that we should grapple with this great question of our relations with China in a worthy manner; that we should insist on arguing it out, keeping it apart from all petty personal differences, and not allowing the Government to ride off on a false issue, or

to bluster through with an appeal to the British lion. Our own friends are so sore with the remembrance of 1857, so much afraid of an alliance with the Radicals, and I fear so little alive to the real magnitude of the question, that, unless some steps are taken to bring it properly before them, I fear they will not support us properly when the time comes; and that so not only will Lord Palmerston obtain a triumph at the moment, but, what is of far greater consequence, he will be encouraged to go on in his present course, and that the mischief which is now I think preventible, may become irreparable.

"I hope you will forgive me for troubling you with all this long discourse; but I am truly anxious to see some careful provision made for a good debate, and a good division whenever Liddell can get his hearing.—Believe me, yours very faithfully,

"STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE.

"The Right Hon. B. Disraeli, M.P."

The main points in his argument are his usual main points: avoidance of intervention and of entanglements; desire of a policy, a reasonable policy, a permanent policy; hatred of petty personal squabbles. Yet, in March 29, at a dinner in Exeter, Sir Stafford criticised the foreign policy of the Government with considerable vivacity. "They were possessed of a marvellous secret, of a patent invention, by which they were to settle the affairs of the world without any expenditure of blood or treasure on the part of England. They were in the happy position of possess-

ing what we may consider the patent medicine of England —'moral influence.' Never was there a patent medicine of Mr Holloway's more puffed and vaunted." He spoke of the Danish war, and blamed, not the policy of biting, but the policy of bark without bite. Yes, as we are toothless, it becomes us not to growl. In another letter of July 6, on the Danish debate, he again returns to his *via media*, that *via media* so difficult to find, if indeed it exists, "between fussy interference and absolute indifference." Lord Russell, in his opinion, had interfered by finding fault with both sides, Austria-Prussia and Denmark, thereby "keeping up the quarrel, and putting England into the forefront of the strife," a position from which Lord Russell and England very expeditiously scuttled.

A few days in autumn were spent at Highclere. His shooting "was execrable," but he was consoled with an evening of ghost stories. "Mrs —— had the advantage of us in having herself seen a ghost." He expected a visit from Grumpus, the Highclere bogy, who, it is true, had been laid in the Red Sea for a hundred years, but his time there was now nearly expired. Sir Stafford went to York for a feast of social science, and met the ill-fated Lord Frederick Cavendish, "a very nice fellow, but a sort of incendiary Radical, something like what Lord de Grey used to be. . . . The principal delight of our friends here (Kirby Hall) is Dizzy's advice to the farmers to cross their sheep with the Cotswolds. Can't you imagine him gravely giving it, as if he knew the difference between a Cotswold

and a Southdown?" The letters of the vacation are not otherwise interesting, except for a regret that Edward I. did not live to win the battle of Bannockburn. There is just one other point, to be seized by the folk-lorist, eager for a rare chance in those grounds. Sir Stafford refers to a story of "The False Nurse," which interested the children. "She was the attendant of a youth named Young Lumpton, concerning whom Mrs —— knows a ballad, though nobody else seems to know it." Now, in the ballad of "Lamkin" we read—

> "But the nourice was a false limmer
> As e'er hung on a tree.
> She laid a plot wi' Lamkin,
> Whan her lord was o'er the sea."

Lamkin killed the baby, a child of Lord Wearie's, because Lord Wearie would not pay Lamkin's little bill. Thus, in the Scotch version, Lamkin is the traitor; in the version referred to by Sir Stafford, Young Lumpton (clearly the same name as Lamkin), is the victim of the false nourice. Miss Landon published an English version, called "Long Lonkin." There are also "Bold Rankin," and "Long Lankyn," and "Belinkin," and "Lambert Linkin."[1]

In January 1865, Sir Stafford stayed at Burghley, and met Mr Disraeli there. "Dizzy is in great force, meaning, *I hope*, to be very prudent next session." Visiting his son Henry at Merton, he found "the neglect of dress rather scandalous here, and shocking to my old-fashioned no-

[1] Child's English and Scotch Ballads (London, 1861), iii. 94. Professor Child seems not to know "Young Lumpton."

tions." Democracy again! "I feel a sort of envy of the boys, and a pleasant remembrance of old times. How I should like to begin my life over again, and go over exactly the same course, if one could be allowed to amend a few steps here and there." What a confession of a happy life, and how much more inviting Nirvana would be to most people!

He was alone in town this spring, "deprived of the whole joy of my life," and "drowning my sorrows in the bowl," the temperate bowl. "I am beginning to entertain" (this is not *à propos* of the bowl) "some doubts of my own identity. Two or three people yesterday said I had been seen going about with my arm in a sling. Adderley says he thought he saw me coming into the house in that condition. Just this minute I met young Puller, who shook hands, and asked me about my volunteering, and my position drill, taking me for some lawyer, who is a friend of his." We all have our doubles, our "Blobbs of Wadham," as in Mr James Payn's amusing tale, but we very seldom find out who he is. As a rule, not a very reputable person.

He was now in the Endowed Schools Commission, and hoped, in this even larger labour, to get on quicker than in the Public Schools Inquiry. The year 1865 unluckily contains none of his letters to Mr Disraeli, and Sir Stafford's adventures and opinions have to be disentangled from his private correspondence. He thought things looked ill for his party (March 2) in view of the general election of July. On March 29, he writes thus

about Mr Gladstone and the Irish Church: "Gladstone made a terribly long stride in his downward progress last night, and denounced the Irish Church in a way which shows how, by-and-by, he will deal not only with it but with the Church of England too. I wonder how the 'Guardian' will get over it, and what Palmer thought of him. As to ——, I suppose he will go any lengths. As Moore Stevens said, 'A man who insists on drinking Gladstone claret because it is called Gladstone's will do anything.' He was at the Commission yesterday, and very friendly. Hardy made an admirable speech last night. I should think the Oxford election must have been pretty well settled by the contrast between his speech and Gladstone's. The latter was evidently annoyed that his colleagues had decided on opposing Dillwyn's motion. He laid down the doctrines that the tithe was national property, and ought to be dealt with by the State in the manner most advantageous to the people; and that the Church of England was only national because the majority of the people still belonged to her, and that the tithe ought to be applied not to the general advantage of the Church, but to the advantage of the people in the district from which it was derived. Consequently it is plain that he must hold that the tithe of Wales, where the Dissenters are in a majority, does not properly belong to the Church; and by-and-by we shall find that he will carry the principle a great deal further. It is sad to see what he is coming to."

It is not of equal importance, but it is diverting to read

that Lord Clarendon, the chairman of the Public Schools Commission, made a noble false quantity in his speech in the Public Schools debate. Canon Cook was defeated at an election for the Athenæum (by the Committee probably) in favour of Mr Mark Pattison, "an essayist and reviewer. It looks bad for our theology."

In the midst of matters no longer important, and "a horrible Donnybrook sort of affair" in the Committee on Irish taxation, came the terrible news of President Lincoln's murder. Sir Stafford's letter may be quoted: he had said little in public, when most men said too much, about the war in the United States: "The news from Washington was afterwards confirmed. Is it not horrible? I don't know when I have felt so much upset by a public event. One had come to feel quite a personal interest in Lincoln, and to wish to see him carry this great work through; and now both he is cut off, and a most unworthy successor takes his place, and there must be a fierce spirit engendered against the South, which will breed fierce resentment in return, and quite destroys one's hope that the end of the war would bring about a return of kindliness. It is touching to see that Lincoln had been speaking kindly of Lee and others in the Cabinet that morning. Seward too will be a loss if, as I suppose, he dies."

An awkward circumstance was at hand—Mr Gladstone's election at Oxford, where Sir Stafford had thought of standing. We have seen how hard Sir Stafford worked for his old friend in earlier days. Now, when he was

canvassed, he "felt low," and "I have been obliged to reply that I don't intend to vote at all. I would rather have lost my own seat, I think." In his own election, at Stamford (July 14), he met with no opposition. In his speech there, he criticised finance; but praised the Government for not interfering, as he believed the Emperor of the French would readily have done, in the affairs of America. He argued for economy, on the broad ground that the poor pay a greater proportion of taxes than the rich. He said nothing about Reform as an imminent question.

In August he went to Hawarden. "The Gladstones were most affectionate." Mr Gladstone behaved with the greatest kindness and cordiality on this occasion. He told Sir Stafford (July 21), that it was "not his fault, but his misfortune," that he (Sir Stafford) was not his successor at Oxford, where he was beaten, going to South Lancashire. He had wished to retire from Oxford, and would have given Sir Stafford notice in good time. But he was advised to contest the University seat. He received from Sir Stafford himself "a kind—nay, an affectionate letter." It had been Sir Stafford's intention to vote for his opponent and old friend, if his vote could have turned the election. It would be pleasant to quote all the words of this wise and kindly letter. The friendships of politicians are indeed devastated by politics, by religion, as well as by death. Mr Gladstone's correspondence with Sir Stafford on Church Establishment and religion at this juncture was, as he says, their first on

such matters for a long time, and likely to be their last. It is no breach of confidence to remark that it contained Mr Gladstone's familiar opinions on the comparative merits of Belief and Establishment. With this friendly interchange of ideas, the chronicle may end for the year.

Lord Palmerston had died, and with him old England. New times had begun, and the People was to "come to its own,"—and to other people's.

The year 1866 was as important in the career of Sir Stafford as in the life of the nation. The Government proposed a Reform Bill, which was thrown out by Whig malcontents acting with the Tories, and the Conservatives came in under Lord Derby. Then began the *régime* of Conservative Ministries in office, checked by violent Liberal agitation in London and in the country. Then began, or rather continued, for Peel had commenced what Peel's opponent revived, the Conservatives' system of stealing the Radical clothes, according to the old saying, and producing the very measures they were expected to resist. Such were the "pantomimic illusions," more or less glittering, of Mr Disraeli. For his part, Sir Stafford now first entered the Cabinet as President of the Board of Trade, while later, after some famous Tory secessions, he became Secretary for India. In the earlier half of this year he kept a private diary, and nothing can give a better idea of the inner hopes and fears, and combinations of the time, than this diary itself. We print it here

—that is, next in place, Chapter VIII.—with a very few necessary excisions. It is greatly to be regretted that Sir Stafford never persevered very long with those records, which are much more valuable materials for intimate history of events and characters than can usually be obtained.

CHAPTER VIII.

DIARY, JANUARY TO JULY 1866.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT—OPPOSITION TO REFORM BILL—GOSSIP—COMBINATIONS—MR DISRAELI'S OPINIONS—CHURCH AND STATE—FENIANS—MR LOWE—THE FRANCHISE—MR MILL ON IRELAND—FENIAN PROGRESS—THE THIRD PARTY—INCREASE OF VALUE OF LAND—TALKS WITH MR DISRAELI—MEETING AT LORD DERBY'S—DISARMING IN IRELAND—PREHISTORIC CELTIC CLAIMS—RUMOURS—MR GLADSTONE INTRODUCES REFORM BILL—AN IRISH SUGGESTION—NAPOLEON ON JOSEPHINE—"DREAMS OF PRINCESSES IN FAIRYLAND"—THE OATHS BILL—INTRIGUES—LORD GROSVENOR'S AMENDMENT—MR DISRAELI ON MR LOWE—SPECULATIONS IN THE VOID—LORD DERBY TAKES OFFICE—GENERAL PEEL—NORTHCOTE'S POSITION IN NEW GOVERNMENT—BOARD OF TRADE, AND A SEAT IN THE CABINET—AT WINDSOR—THE HYDE PARK RIOTS—ANXIETY—THE SPLIT IN THE CONSERVATIVE CAMP—UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT AT RECONCILIATION—ACCEPTS MR DISRAELI'S REFORM POLICY—BECOMES SECRETARY FOR INDIA.

Feb. 1, 1866.—Came up to London for the meeting of the new Parliament. There are 193 new members, of whom 150 have never sat in any Parliament. The majority for the Liberals is considered to be about 70.

There are not above 10 Conservative members from all Scotland.

Feb. 2.—Took my seat. Saw C. Ryan at the Athenæum, who says it is reported that Bright recommends delay in bringing in the Reform Bill, so that the Government may have time to consolidate themselves; and so that if beaten on some other question they may go out with their hands free, and without having put their supporters to the pain of voting for a moderate measure.

Feb. 3.—At the Carlton, F. W. Knight told me there had been a talk of putting a pressure on Dis. to oppose the Reform Bill on the second reading. K. deprecates this. Long talk with Dis. this afternoon. He says he communicated with Lord D. after the election, putting before him the scattering of our friends and the necessity of reconstruction; that he told him he thought reconstruction could not be carried through without a change of leader in one or the other House, and that he was himself willing to give up the lead in the Commons in order to facilitate it; that Lord D. rejected that idea, and did not seem to appreciate the alternative; that they had had various communications by letter and by word of mouth, and that they had discussed the question of possible arrangements with the Duke of Cleveland, Lord Clarendon, the Duke of Somerset, and others. Lord D. considered that if Dis. gave up the lead of the Commons, there was nobody for it but W. E. G., "who is quite prepared to take the high Conservative line;" "but we should never get on together, he would always be quarrel-

ling with me, and I should be thinking he wanted to trip me up."

Dis. is of opinion that the Government will throw over Bright and bring in a moderate bill. It will be opposed by men on the Government side, and, as Dis. believes, will be lost. It that case it may be doubtful whether the Government would resign and would not rather pocket the affront, slightly modify the construction of the Cabinet, and go on without a Reform Bill at all. If the measure is a strong one, and they are beaten, then they must resign, unless (which I cannot believe) they dissolve. Dis. thinks we ought to be prepared to take office if Lord Derby is sent for. We want thirty-five men, and he asks me to consider whether we can get them. His idea is to offer Cabinet office to Lowe and Horsman, and he asks me to sound Lowe as to his probable willingness to join. He will himself sound Horsman, to whom he offered office in 1859.

Dined with ——, and asked him about Lowe. He says L. does not think the present Government can stand; that he has no dislike for Dis., but a good deal of contempt for him; that he has a supreme contempt for Horsman; and, finally, that he is essentially a Radical, except upon the question of the franchise. There may be a temporary alliance between L. and the Conservatives, but they cannot permanently act together on Church questions and the like. —— says there is an idea of a medium Ministry, of which either the Duke of Somerset or Lord Stanley might be at the head.

Feb. 4.—Called on Dis., and had a long talk. Told him ——'s view of Lowe's dispositions, and mentioned my own doubts as to the prudence of making any overtures to either L. or H. until at all events the Government have shown their hand. On the one hand, I don't think these two have any following; on the other hand, I think they would alarm many of our Church supporters. The Cabinet of 1859, with L. and H. substituted for Walpole and Henley, would never do. Dis. said he should certainly make a place for Walpole. He said he was anxious for L. to join us, and he did not believe it would be distasteful to Pakington. I strongly urged him to make no overtures to L. without ascertaining the feeling of his own colleagues, and particularly Pakington's. I said I thought if the Liberal party broke up on the Reform question we might gain more strength and incur less danger by addressing ourselves to some of the old Whigs than by taking in L. and H. I instanced Hastings Russell as a man to be approached in the event of the Government breaking up in such a manner as to put Lord Russell out of the field. Dis. thought this not impossible, and referred to the state of Lord Russell's health as rendering it probable that he might retire if the Reform Bill broke down. He also speculated on what might happen should Lord R. die, and thought the Queen would in that case let W. E. G. try to reconstruct the Government.

I told Dis. that I thought the chief question for us to consider was the future position of the party when the Reform hitch should have been got over. The question of

the relation of Church and State will probably become the most important with which we shall have to deal. We must endeavour to maintain the Establishment without unduly subjecting the Church to the State. This will be difficult under any circumstances, but especially so if the Government we form does not command the confidence of Churchmen. Already some of the High Churchmen are so alarmed at the danger of Erastianism that they are for a free Church, and they look to W. E. G. as their leader to that result. If we compose our Cabinet of men who have so little of their confidence as Stanley, Lowe, and Horsman, the breach may be precipitated, and men like myself may be forced to join the free Church party as the lesser evil. I told him of my correspondence and conversations with W. E. G. in the autumn, and of my general disposition towards him, as well as of the part I had taken in the Oxford contest. Ultimately he agreed that it would be best to wait before taking further steps. In speaking of Stanley, he said he had told him (S.) in the autumn that he (Dis.) looked upon a reconstruction of our party as probable; that he thought Lord D. would not again take office; that he felt that the party would not act under himself; that he was prepared to give up the lead, and felt "old enough to amuse himself below the gangway"; and that S. ought to be prepared to form a Government if called on. He said S. was horrified at the idea, declared that he was willing to act under Dis., and would take the Foreign Office if desired, but would not take the Government himself. Dis. thinks the Liberals

greatly mistaken in their idea that S. would act with them, and considers him to be now very Conservative, only hesitating on the question of Church rates. Dis. said he understood that the idea of legislation on the Ritual question was abandoned.

He said the Queen liked W. E. G., and praised him as being "more serious" than some others—probably than Lord Palmerston. He said the idea of laying the robes on the throne had been given up.

Dined with A. Hobhouse, who told me he had met Lowe and E. Cardwell at C. Cardwell's yesterday. Lowe said of Bright's breeches difficulty, "The Speaker could set that right in a minute by inviting Bright's *sans-culotte* friends!" Cardwell was solemn over the Fenians. It was remarkable that with an organised agitation and great exertions the conspirators had not succeeded in getting a single respectable man to join them. "Ah, it's just the same here," says Lowe; "the Government have been trying to get up a Reform agitation, and can't get a single respectable man to join."

Feb. 5.—Dined with Dis. Party of eighteen. Lord Burghley, Lord Hamilton, Lord Stanley, Taylor, Jolliffe, Colonel Lowther (now father of the House of Commons), Sir E. B. Lytton, Sir W. Heathcote, Sir J. Trollope, Mr Wyndham, E. Duncombe, Sir W. Wynn, J. Manners, Cranborne, General Peel, Pakington. Queen's Speech read after dinner. Concluding paragraph received with a burst of laughter. It looks like a break-up of the Government. Stanley reports that Sir C. Wood has re-

signed. Dis. very cordial. Drove home with Cranborne, who quite agrees in deprecating the junction with Lowe and Horsman, thinks it would never do for Dis. to resign, but that "somebody else" might do so with advantage. Dis.'s comment on the Queen's Speech was that it convicted the world of great injustice to Lord Palmerston, who, it would now seem, was probably the most ardent reformer in his Cabinet. By the by, it is curious that no allusion is made in the Speech to Lord Palmerston's death. Taylor told us that in discussing the question of pairs, Brand had said he had carefully analysed their own side, and found only five Palmerstonians! This is quite the living dog and dead lion.

Feb. 6.—Adderley mentioned that some careful inquiries had been made in certain boroughs, from which it appeared that 26 per cent of the present £10 householders were of the artisan class, and that the extension of the suffrage to £6 householders would give the artisans 78 per cent. He says this was mentioned before Sir C. Wood, and that Wood said the Government information goes beyond that. It seems to be, though, that Wood is much opposed to the Reform Bill: he is reported to have said, "I am afraid I shall end my political life in opposition to my old political friends." Lord Grey, by the by, spoke on the Address this evening from the Opposition benches. Lowe said to Adderley to-day, "If you stand firm to your guns and oppose the bill, I will undertake to bring you men enough to give you a majority of fifty against it." A. said, "What bill do you mean?" L.

said, "Any bill that lowers the borough franchise by one sixpence."

Went to see the opening, and waited as near the door of the House of Lords as we were allowed to go till the Speaker passed, so that I had a good view of the House from the time the doors were opened till Black Rod and Speaker returned. The Queen sat perfectly motionless, in black, with a Marie Stuart cap and long white flaps, the blue ribbon of the Garter, a good many diamonds, and the scarlet robes over the arm of the throne. It is supposed they were the Prince Consort's. The rest of the House was crowded, and very brilliant in colour. It was a very picturesque sight. When the Speaker came, we had a regular fight to follow him, and some crowded him so as to catch his gown and compel him to stop for some time to disengage himself. The Chancellor read the Speech, of which we couldn't hear a word. Ninety-two peeresses had sent to claim their places; there have never been thirty on any former occasion.

Mr Graham, seconder of the Address, spoke remarkably well this evening. So did —— ——. Dis. said, "If he had only a single ray of common-sense he would be a leading man." The Government were very roughly handled for their cattle plague blundering, and no one defended them, though Leslie made a sort of apology for them. Lowe's speech was very severe. W. E. G. tried to induce me to say something for them, but I didn't see why I should. I could only have said I thought them very wrong not to call Parliament together earlier.

Feb. 7.—Schools Commission. Examined Mr Hill and V. C. Page Wood. Mr Erle told us of a charitable bequest of £300 a-year for the dissemination among the poor of the testator's moral and religious opinions, to be intrusted to some man who had *failed* in literature.

Feb. 17 (*Saturday*).—House met to-day to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act for Ireland until September. The bill was passed through all its stages and sent up to the House of Lords before five o'clock. The information received by the Government appears to have grown rapidly more alarming; and the presence of a large number (about 500) of the Irish-American officers, trained in the American Civil War, and the attempts to seduce the troops, are serious causes for uneasiness. Since the earlier arrests, the Fenians have learnt prudence, and never carry written documents that could implicate them: it is therefore exceedingly difficult to deal with them under the ordinary law, even though their persons are perfectly known. Bright made a remarkably eloquent, but mischievous, and, except for mischief, aimless speech. Roebuck answered him well after the Roebuck fashion. Horsman spoke very indifferently; he can do nothing without preparation. J. S. Mill spoke: it was the first time I had heard him, as I have been absent for a week on account of poor ——'s death, but he has been speaking constantly on the cattle plague, and has acquired the nickname of the Windmill. His speech to-day was very ineffective both in manner and matter. The great Alderman Dillon (imprisoned for the rebellion of 1848)

made a miserable speech, Sir John Gray (another of the same band) a fluent but rather vulgar one, the O'Donoghue a good one as usual, with some smart cuts at the vacillation of the Government. Whalley providentially could not get a hearing. W. E. G. wound up the debate with a good and telling speech, of which the end ought to have been shorter.

Going down to the House, I met H. Corry, who thought matters serious. He said nearly the whole of Ireland was disaffected except the upper ten thousand. He thought it not unlikely that the Fenians might modify their present programme, so as to gain the support of the priests and many others who now held aloof from them. He was very distrustful of the Constabulary and even of the Roman Catholic soldiers; but then he is anti-Roman to the core. He said the Landed Estates Court was almost shut up in consequence of the distrust occasioned by the Fenians, and that trustees were refusing to advance money on Irish mortgages. The value of land has fallen 6 or 7 per cent. He said it was reported that the American Fenians were remitting large sums through —— ——, and that —— —— had informed the Government, and that this had hastened their action.

Dis. told me this evening at the House of Commons that he heard on good authority that the majority of the Cabinet were for dropping the Reform Bill, but that Lord R. and W. E. G. were determined to go on with it immediately, and that W. E. G. had said, in answer to a suggestion that he should let the second reading wait

till after the Budget, that he did not want to run the risk of bringing in a Budget for other men to pass.

There is talk of a petition against Goschen as being an alien. This originates in a petition having been threatened against Grant of Kidderminster on that ground. Our friends said if that petition was proceeded with they would present one against Goschen.

Feb. 20.—T. H. F. tells me he hears the Cabinet Committee on the Reform Bill consists of Lord R., W. E. G., Milner Gibson, C. Villiers, and one other whose name he didn't know. Dis. says C. Villiers is very Conservative.

Mr Clay's bill for giving a vote to every man who can read, write, and work the four rules, brought out the members of the "Third Party" to-night. They were obviously acting in concert. Their support of Clay was given *diminuendo.* Gregory (the least important) supported him decidedly; Elcho praised and blamed alternately, and said he only preferred his bill to the supposed Government measure; Horsman said nothing in support of Clay, and confined himself to an amusing attack on the Government. Lowe (the most important) did not speak at all, though his friends were in constant communication with him. He was evidently waiting to reply on W. E. G., had the latter been weak enough to enter into the discussion. Noel says the Third Party meet constantly at Elcho's house; that they number, or profess to number, about fifty followers; that they would join us, but will not accept Dis. as leader. He is anxious that communication should be opened with them, and

suggests Jolliffe as a good negotiator. He suggested Stanley, Cranborne, or General Peel as a possible leader; but agreed that the first would not command the confidence of Churchmen, and that Cranborne was too young. He is under the impression that Dis. would serve under Peel. This I doubt.

Long talk with F. Kelly about the malt-tax agitation. He agrees to keep matters quiet till the Reform Bill is in print, when we shall see how parties are likely to shape themselves. He agreed that it would be better for us, if we are to come into office, to have the question debated and settled before we do so, rather than have to offend our agricultural friends by resisting it when in office. I pointed out to him that W. E. G. would probably not allow us this advantage: he would either concede something, and so gain popularity, or move the previous question, and so leave the matter open for us to deal with on our responsibility. Possibly we may settle this troublesome question by a beer-duty, but it will not be easy to do so.

Feb. 21.—Examined the Duke of Cambridge to-day before the Schools Inquiry Commission. He is President of Christ's Hospital. He gave his evidence very clearly and well, and argued his points ably. He was extremely Conservative in all that relates to the school, and defended the dress warmly. The yellow petticoat has, however, been given up, and a flannel waistcoat substituted. There is a talk of the new Middle-Class College buying the Charterhouse.

Dined at Grillion's—Lord Stanhope, Lord Percy, Lord Carnarvon, R. Palmer, Adderley, Duke of Cleveland, and Sir J. B. East. Lord Percy mentioned, with reference to the great increase in the value of land in the metropolitan counties, that an estate in Surrey was offered five years ago for £100,000 and the highest offer was £90,000, which was refused: it has now been sold for £270,000. Lord Carnarvon said a solicitor had told him that a man who had been a clerk in Liverpool at £150 salary two or three years ago, had come to him saying that he had made £700,000 in the cotton speculations, and wanted to buy an estate. The solicitor mentioned some properties for sale, but they did not suit the purchaser, who said he wanted a house in perfect condition, furnished, curtains up, ready to go into at once, and if possible one that had belonged to an old county family, and which would entitle him to represent the county!

The number of members petitioned against is seventy, of whom forty-eight are Liberals and twenty-two Conservatives.

Feb. 22.—Had conversations at the House of Commons this evening with Dis. and with Jolliffe. Dis. told me he heard that the Reform Bill was to be brought in next week. He thought the Third Party had come out very badly on Tuesday. It made him think with dismay of having such empty fellows in the Cabinet. Lowe, he understood, was much disgusted at the figure they had cut. The only good speech of the night, he thought, was Clay's. I told him of Noel's wish for communications to be opened with the

party, and we again discussed the point, and he advised me to confer with Jolliffe. I took Jolliffe into the back-room, and he said he had come down on purpose to talk to me, and to tell me all he knew. He said he went to Lord Derby after the elections, and told him he considered we were now in the same position in the House of Commons as when Lord D. took office in 1858 with a majority of sixty against him. (Lord D.: "And I never mean to put myself in that position again.") "But there is this difference, that there is now a Third Party, organised to some extent, and claiming to have about forty followers." Lord D. inquired what they wanted. Jolliffe said, "They won't serve under you; they don't like the name of Derbyite; they are ready to act with us, I believe, and they are straining every nerve to get hold of Stanley." Lord D., "Ah! they think if they get him they can float, but I don't think they will get him; and if they do, they won't float." Jolliffe then urged Lord D. to call his friends together, if only as a matter of compliment. Lord D. thought it would only expose our weakness to do so. He said he was not disposed to stand in the way of any arrangement that might be feasible, and that he knew Dis. would also waive any claims of his own for the same purpose. I then told Jolliffe of my conversations with Dis., and of his willingness to resign the lead and go below the gangway; but that I did not think he would serve under any one else. Jolliffe said the Third Party were looking to Stanley as leader, and would act with Dis. in any other capacity. They

said, "Lord Derby might be disposed to sacrifice himself for the advantage of his country." . . . Jolliffe agreed that Stanley would not command the confidence of the party. As for General Peel, he said, "If any one were to propose the lead to him, he would only laugh at it." On the whole, he agreed with me in thinking that there was no use, or rather that it would be better not to make overtures to the Third Party at present. He ended by saying that he thought it might not be a bad plan to let the Government pass a moderate Reform Bill, and so get rid of the question,—a view which Dis. received, when I told him our conversation, with the deepest contempt, considering that such a course would seat the Whigs for a lifetime. Matters are now very difficult. I suggested that Dis. might take the Foreign Office himself. "But what would you do for a leader?" I said I thought Mr Canning had led the House of Commons as Foreign Secretary. He said, "Ah! but things have wholly changed since that time: the work of the Foreign Office has more than trebled, and the House of Commons is quite a different place. The leader ought to be able to speak with some knowledge and reflection upon every subject; and how can the Foreign Secretary, with an enormous mass of very absorbing work, with red boxes constantly coming to interrupt him, and with his mind engaged on distant politics, be ready to do that?" As regards our friends of the Third Party, I again advised delay. The great point to gain would be to get some of the great Whig

families—Lord Lansdowne, Lord Westminster, D. Cleveland, Hastings Russell, &c. It is better to approach the Third Party through them than them through the Third Party. We must have Lowe; but the others are worth very little, and it would be far better not to recognise their organisation. The Grosvenors seem from all accounts very likely to be friendly to us, and Lord Lansdowne would probably join us. Dis. said he had thought of offering him the Paris Embassy. I said I would rather see him in the Cabinet as Privy Seal or the like.

Feb. 24.—Meeting at Lord Derby's—Dis., Pakington, Henley, Peel, Walpole, Jolliffe, Taylor, Hardy, Heathcote, Naas. Agreed to let Bouverie's bill (Fellows of Colleges) pass second reading without discussion, on Bouverie's undertaking to say nothing, and to agree that the fight should take place on going into Committee. The necessity under which the country gentlemen will feel themselves of attending sessions next week to settle the cattle plague Orders will render a full attendance impossible. The main question discussed was as to the Oaths Bill. The general feeling was that we must agree to a uniform oath. Walpole contended that the oath was threefold: (1) a simple oath of allegiance to Queen Victoria, her heirs and successors (by the by, the Government bill leaves out "heirs and successors"); (2) an oath of undivided allegiance (the oath of supremacy), disclaiming the authority of any one but the Queen; (3) the oath of limited allegiance, to the heirs of the Electress of Hanover, being Protestants. The form proposed by the Government is a simple oath

of allegiance: we ought at least to make it an oath of limited allegiance, for it is quite possible that the Sovereign or the Prince of Wales might become a Roman Catholic. Whether to make it an oath of undivided allegiance must depend upon the possibility of so framing it as to render it possible for a Roman Catholic to take it. Walpole thought words might be inserted declaring that no foreign prince, &c., "hath by the law of the United Kingdom any jurisdiction, pre-eminence, superiority, or authority" in this realm. This point is to stand over for future consideration.

There seems to have been a sharp encounter between X. and the Speaker last night. X. went up and asked what the Speaker meant by calling a man to order "who had been fifteen years in the House, and knew quite well what he was about." He said, "I won't stand it from you or any other man." The Speaker said, "I was never so insulted by any member of this House." X. wound up with, "You haven't heard the last of it yet, nor has that man," pointing to W. E. G.

W. J. F. told me that Lord Gosford's agent told him of a curious effect of the disarming in Ireland. Many of Lord G.'s tenants are now bringing in their arrears of rent, because they say there is no use in keeping back the money now; the Fenians will come and take it from them, now they have lost their arms. One miserable fellow, who occupies a cabin like a pigsty, brought £100 to the agent, and begged him to take care of it for him.

Dined with Fitzwilliam Dick, Lord Hawarden, R. Mon-

tague, Cole, Corry, Colonel Somerset, Guinness, W. E. Duncombe, Beach, Sir J. Fergusson, Ion Hamilton, Leader, Rolt, Sir B. Bridges, and Sir J. Walsh. Hawarden told me one of his Protestant tenants had asked him for a licence to keep his gun. "Why do you want your gun?" "Well, I'd feel cold without it." Hawarden said, "I think you'd be better without it." "Well, perhaps I should; for the Fenians might catch one of my children, and threaten to murder him if I didn't give up my gun to them." Hawarden told me that all the peasantry in Tipperary had maps or indexes to the property formerly held by their ancestors, and that some years ago when Lord Lismore rebuilt Shanbally Castle on a different site, a fight took place in Clogheen between the aboriginal claimant of the townland on which the castle had formerly stood and the claimant of that to which it had been removed, as to their respective rights; the former contending that his claim to the castle still held good, and followed it to the neighbouring townland. The two disputants were brought before Lord Lismore for fighting, and the cause of quarrel was then explained to him, somewhat to his surprise, we may suppose.

Feb. 28.—The air has been full of rumours of political changes for some days past, and the 'Times' has given expression to them to-day, only to be contradicted by the 'Globe' this evening. Dis. told me on Monday that he heard that the Cabinet on Saturday broke up in admired disorder, three members—the Duke of Somerset, Lord Clarendon, and Lord de Grey (?)—having left the room

in disgust. The second bill, for the redistribution of seats, is said to have been given up. The general impression is, that the Government are in a very critical position. Lord Russell's health is again said to be unsatisfactory. ——, with whom I had some talk to-day, favoured the idea of a Government being formed on the principle of deferring a Reform Bill, and thought it might very well be put off for ten years. He saw no difficulties of a political character in the way of a fusion of parties; and thought that, as everybody was agreed that the Irish Church could not be touched, Church questions would present no obstacle. He thought the great difficulty would be W. E. G., who would never rest content without office.

March 1.—W. E. G. announced the Reform Bill for the 12th, in words generally supposed to convey that it would not deal with the redistribution of seats. The notice was very coldly received.

March 2.—Dis. told me to-night that General Peel had come to him for the purpose of speaking of the rumours that Lord D. was to give up the lead of the party to Stanley, and had told him that if S. was to be leader he (General P.) must make his bow to the party and retire. Dis. told him that Lord D. had no idea of retiring. Meanwhile, here is the General's *pronunciamiento*.

Saw Cairns, who has only just returned from Italy, and has heard nothing of recent gossip. He talked a good deal of possible combinations, and thinks a party might be formed under the Duke of Somerset; with

General Peel to lead the House of Commons; Lord Derby to stand aloof, as he probably would not serve under any one; and Dis. either to stand aloof or to take some office like the Duchy of Lancaster, *not* the Foreign Office. He thought Cardwell and Palmer would join such an administration, and that we ought to get the latter either as Attorney-General or as Chancellor. I asked him what office General P. could hold,—Chancellor of Exchequer? He said, No. He thought he might be President of the Council. He could not well lead as Secretary for War.

Gregory's motion, praying her Majesty to use her influence with foreign Powers to abolish the capture of private property at sea, came on to-night. I could not stay to hear it out. General Peel whispered to me that the Government might have easily answered it by saying that her Majesty has no influence whatever with a single foreign Power! Pretty true.

An Irishman has written to me suggesting that a Reform Bill should be passed giving tenants a number of votes proportioned to the length of their leases, of which their landlords should dispose of a certain number —*e.g.*, a tenant with a twenty years' lease to have three votes, of which his landlord should dispose of one; a tenant with a forty years' lease to have six votes, and his landlord to dispose of two of them.

March 3.—Dined with Miss Stanley to meet Lord and Lady Russell. The Dean of Westminster, Lord Houghton, Sir R. Phillimore, and Wm. Fremantle were the only other gentlemen there. Lord R. seemed very much aged,

and was (*pace tanti viri*) twaddling.[1] He talked a little of his visit to Italy in 1814, and of his interview with Napoleon at Elba, but said nothing worth noting. Napoleon asked him rather eagerly, what the state of feeling was in France, and said, "L'armée, était-elle contente?" The news of Josephine's death arrived while he was there, and Napoleon said, "She was very extravagant in lace."

X. talked to me of W. E. G.'s position; thought he was not likely to become very Radical, that he was anxious to found a family, and would like his son to be a peer. In Church matters he thought he would "give up everything but dogma." The Irish Church speech last session was, he says, made deliberately in order to show his Oxford constituents that they must not look on him as a supporter of the Establishment.

March 7. — Dinner-party: Salisburys, Stanhopes, Chelmsfords, Neville Grenville, Lyttelton, Stanley, Hesketh Palk, T. H. F., Banks Stanhope, G. S. Lefevre.

Lady —— said Cardwell was very unhappy at being suspected of having given the 'Times' the information as to Lord Russell's retirement. Cardwell, she said, was much dissatisfied with his position, and very anxious to escape from it. A fusion must soon take place. I asked, Under whom? Lady —— said, Under W. E. G. That Lord Derby would fail to form a Ministry; that the Queen would send for W. E G., of whom she is very fond; and

[1] Some one, hearing of Lord Russell's death, spoke of him as "poor Lord Russell." "Why do you call him 'poor'?" said Sir Stafford; "he had the chance to do a great work, and he did it."

that he would address himself to the Conservatives. "He will take General Peel, and Stanley, and yourself; I don't know whether he will take Cranborne. He will take Cardwell and Lowe; that will do for the House of Commons. Then for the Lords he will take the Duke of Argyll, Lord de Grey, and Lord Hartington." (Query, Did this mean that Hartington was to be called up?) "The difficulty is as to the Foreign Office." I said, as to myself, "I am bound to Dis." Lady —— said, "Of course nothing would be done without the full assent of both our leaders." I said, "I don't think the Conservatives would accept W. E. G. as their leader, and I don't see that he is drawing towards them. Certainly his conduct to-day (on the Church Rate Bill) doesn't look like it." As to the Foreign Office, I suggested Stanley. Lady —— said, "No; that won't do." I said I had looked to a coalition with the Whigs, and had thought of Hastings Russell. Lady —— said, "No; you must put that quite out of your head: he is Liberalising more and more, and has just asked Bright to dinner."

March 8.—Meeting at Lord D.'s on the Oaths Bill. Dis., Henley, Cranborne, Heathcote, Jolliffe, Taylor, Peel, Naas, Hunt, Manners. Lord D. told us he had seen a deputation of 17 or 18 leading English Roman Catholics (Mr Langdale, Sir R. Gerard, &c.), who had discussed the question with him. He had told them that we wanted an oath of allegiance limited according to the Act of Settlement, and some kind of declaration of the Queen's supremacy in her own courts of law. They had expressed

themselves entirely satisfied, and said the overwhelming majority of the English Roman Catholic laity would thankfully accept these terms: they would not answer for the Irish, nor for the hierarchy. The editor of the 'Tablet,' who was present, said that the laity were now forbidden to consent to any form of oath until the hierarchy had pronounced that it was not contrary to religion or morals. Lord D. said he had heard since that Archbishop Manning did not object to his proposed words about the supremacy, but did object to the reference to the Act of Settlement. We all agreed that the reference to the Act of Settlement was essential. With regard to the supremacy, I argued in favour of its insertion, on the ground that so many persons in the country would be alarmed at its omission. It was agreed that we should propose it, but not commit ourselves too strongly to it. If we should be beaten in the House of Commons upon it, Lord D. would probably try to reinsert the words in the House of Lords, and if they were again struck out in the House of Commons, he would advise the House of Lords not to insist on them.

General meeting of the party at Lord Salisbury's. A reporter who was present was first turned out. Lord D. then made a capital speech, saying with regard to the Reform Bill that he advised us to say as little as possible on its introduction, only to insist on having the whole plan of the Government laid before us before we would consider any part of it. His speech was chiefly on the Oaths Bill, and was nearly identical with what Dis. after-

wards said in the House of Commons, including the (erroneous) illustration of the Roman Catholic (?) bigamist. He was warmly cheered. This is the first party meeting I remember at which no one but Lord D. has spoken, and it has been by far the most successful, for it led to only five men voting with Newdegate against the bill. Moreover, the indirect effect has been great, as the meeting has shown that Lord D. has not retired from the lead of the party, and the impression is that the meeting was held to discuss the Reform question. Lowe sent Walpole a very urgent note, written under the apprehension that we were going to declare ourselves in favour of a measure of Reform, urging that there was a statute of limitations as to our obligations, and arguing that Dis. ought to take office. This is a sign that the Third Party are abating their pretensions.

Talked over the situation with Heathcote, who thought the party would not follow W. E. G.

Told Dis. of Lady ——'s views, which he treated as the "dreams of princesses in fairyland," and quite unpractical. "Lady —— wants Stanley to take a leading place. It won't do. W. E. G. and S. sound very well. One is a man of transcendent ability; the other, though not of transcendent ability, has considerable power. But neither of them can deal with men. S. is a mere child in such matters. The other, though more experienced, is too impetuous and wanting in judgment to succeed as a leader." Dis. referred again to General Peel's visit to him, and said Peel had entirely repudiated the notion of becoming

a leader himself. He was quite ready to act with Dis., "though we were not friends at one time." This was an allusion to a challenge which Dis. says General Peel sent him a good many years ago, in consequence of one of his speeches about Sir Robert. Dis. put the matter into Lord G. Bentinck's hands, and Peel was shown that he was in the wrong, and had to apologise. "The paper is somewhere in my family archives." Dis. returned to the view that the only thing to be done was to keep Lord D. up to taking office.

Talked over matters with Cranborne, who ridiculed the idea of acting with W. E. G., or under any one but Dis. He was strongly against Malmesbury, and thought Stanley ought to be Foreign Secretary.

Elcho told Cranborne that Lord Grosvenor was trying to get up a meeting of moderate Whigs against the Reform Bill. Dis. thinks this very important. He says Lord D. will now do nearly as he is told, and that he has promised to communicate with Lord Westminster and Lord Lansdowne.

March 14.—Dined with Cardwell. Forster was there, and talked freely of the Reform Bill, with which he said he was agreeably disappointed. He had expected to be obliged to leave the Government when it should be announced, but now thought the £7 franchise would be accepted by the Liberals as a compromise. He thought Lowe's and Horsman's violent speeches would reconcile the Liberals to this high figure, by showing them that it was a measure of sufficient importance to cause a panic,

and that it might be taken as a settlement for our lifetime. He considered that a dissolution would be quite necessary before we could deal with the redistribution of seats. Ultimately he had no doubt that the Conservatives would be all the stronger for the passing of the bill, as it would make the Radicals feel strong enough to set up for themselves, and then the Whigs would join the Tories.

March 16.—Meeting at Lord Salisbury's. Lord D. unable to attend, being laid up with gout. Dis. made a capital speech, reciting the history of the Reform Bills since 1852; throwing all the blame of the present agitation upon W. E. G.; objecting principally to the county franchise proposed in this bill,—especially the admission of copyholders and leaseholders in boroughs to vote for the counties,—and still more to the fragmentary character of the measure. He said it was obviously our duty unanimously to oppose the bill on the second reading, but that we must leave it to our leaders to decide in what form the opposition had better be made, having reference especially to the feelings and dispositions of our friends on the other side. The meeting was most cordial and unanimous.

It is curious that at least one copy of the new bill has come out with "six" instead of "seven" pounds for the qualification. They must have meant to propose six pounds, and been frightened out of it at the very last moment.

March 23.—House adjourned for the Easter holidays. What will happen when we meet again?

Lord Grosvenor's amendment seems greatly to have disconcerted the Government. It is said that great pressure was put on him to prevent his giving notice of it; but that he replied to those who urged him on the subject that he had fully considered the question with his father, and was now determined to abide the issue. The Government made their final effort this evening, and, as far as one can judge, they have failed. It was announced that W. E. G. would make an important statement on moving the adjournment, and the House was very full, many peers, especially members of the Cabinet, being under the gallery. W. E. G.'s statement of the intention of the Government was coldly received, the only cheers coming from the Radicals below the gangway. He was evidently bent on bullying Grosvenor out of his motion, making a bridge for him to retreat over by promising to state the views of the Government upon redistribution and other questions "in the shape of bills" after the second reading of the Franchise Bill should have been carried. His declaration that the Government would regard Grosvenor's amendment as a vote of want of confidence was a plagiarism from Lord Palmerston on Walpole's amendment upon Stansfeld's motion in 1864; but Grosvenor seems to have more pluck than Walpole, and stood gallantly to his guns, speaking, either designedly or by accident, from our side of the House. I should think he did it designedly. —— was obviously acting in concert with the Government, as a sort of decoy-duck to

draw off some of the Grosvenor party. He seems to have succeeded with Oliphant; though perhaps Oliphant was never to be relied on. So far as we can learn, he has not succeeded with many others. Beaumont spoke out more decidedly against the Government after the notice than he has ever done before, and the impression seems to be that they must be beaten.

Dis. says he has prepared Lord D. for a junction with Lowe; but he is altogether puzzled by Lowe's conduct in ostentatiously placing himself in opposition to us upon Church questions. "Is it a want of practical sense, or is it from some *arrière pensée?*" I suggested that Lowe was perhaps looking to a Ministry of the future, which should stand on a middle-class basis, on principles of pure reason, and in an attitude very unfriendly to the Church. His dislike of Reform arises much from his fear of letting in the class which will be swayed by passion rather than by reason. He might support us, or even join us for a time, as a means of getting rid of the Reform question; but ultimately he would blow us up on Church questions. Dis. thought that this was too long a game for a man of his age to play; Lowe was nearer sixty than fifty, and it could hardly suit him. Upon questions like the Oxford Tests Bill, he thought Lowe might take his own line without difficulty: they were questions involving principles, but not in the nature of questions of State policy; but as to the Irish Church the case was different,—that was a

question of State policy. Stanley, for instance, might go against us on the Tests question, but he would not go against the Irish Church.

In talking over W. E. G. to-night, Dis. advanced the theory that it was a great advantage to a leader of the House of Commons that he should be—not unable, but unwilling to speak. It is certainly a position in which silence is often golden. W. E. G.'s second speech to-night, besides being quite out of order, was very injudicious.

March 24.—Had some talk with X. at the Carlton. He had seen Lord Lichfield and Lord Spencer, and found them hearty; but had done nothing since the announcement of Grosvenor's amendment, considering that the matter had passed into other hands. I asked what he thought of Lowe's conduct on the Church questions. He couldn't understand it, but said he should ask him. He said, "Lowe always has the worst opinion of everybody's motives, and never gives any one credit for acting from high principle. This looks as if he acted from interested motives himself."

March 25.—Walked with X. in Kensington Gardens. He was very full of speculations, and rather disturbed with doubts as to the possibility of finding room for everybody in a fusionist Cabinet. I told him I should myself decline any subordinate office under a Government such as was likely to be formed, and should prefer to take my seat on the back bench with Henley and Heathcote, and watch the turn of events. He said he

too had quite made up his mind not to take a subordinate office under any Government. He agreed that if Lowe commits himself on the Irish Church question, it will give a lever for the enemy to use in breaking up a fusionist Cabinet of which he might form a part. We talked a good deal of the Reform question, and of the Irish Church. As to the former, it would probably be well for us hereafter to try to settle it, but we ought not to attempt to do so till we had a really strong Government capable of carrying what they might propose. We thought we should disfranchise the corrupt boroughs, give more seats to the northern towns, and form smaller divisions of counties, as rural as possible in their character. We thought fancy franchises a mistake; and we thought we might stand on the present limit of the borough franchise, though we should not object to a reduction. As to the Irish Church, X. thought it a great difficulty. I pointed out to him, that so far as the Irish were concerned, it was rather a symptom of what they thought an evil than the evil itself. What they regard as the real grievance is, that whereas the great majority of the population are Roman Catholics, such a large proportion of the soil belongs to Protestants. This is an uncomfortable, but, I suspect, a true view of the case. It shows how Fenianism might easily be worked into the standing web of Irish discontent. I do not as yet see how we ought to deal with the Irish Education question in its various branches. Ought we to maintain the system of mixed education, and support the Queen's

Colleges in their integrity, trusting to the gradual undermining of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church? or ought we to deal with these questions on the principle of denominational education, such as we wish to give effect to in England? If Mr Whittle's recent pamphlet is a fair exposition of the feeling of a large body of the educated Roman Catholic laity, it would seem that we ought to hold firm to the mixed system. Yet it appears unjust to deny to the Roman Catholic Church what so many of us claim for our own.

X. has quite come round to the idea that Lord D. is our principal difficulty. He suggested a scheme of fusion, with the Duke of Devonshire as Prime Minister, and Dis. leader of the House of Commons. This might do, provided the Duke would take the post, and provided Lord D. had dexterity enough to bring the arrangement about; but both provisoes are most problematical.

Lord Grey has written to Lord Grosvenor, highly commending his notice of motion, and saying that it is the greatest public service any private member has rendered for many years.

June 28.—Meeting at Lord Derby's. Present, Lord D., Dis, Lord Salisbury, Lord Bath, Lord Malmesbury, Carnarvon, Lord Chelmsford, Pakington, Peel, Stanley, Manners, Cranborne, Walpole, Henley, Cairns, Adderley, Jolliffe, Trollope, Hardy, Heathcote, Naas, Taylor, and I—twenty-three—"the Grand Jury," as Lord Chelmsford said. Sir E. Lytton not there, the note not having reached him.

Lord D. read some part of the Queen's letter to him, saying . . . that she would not name any particular time for seeing him, but would leave it to him to name his own day and hour, so that he might have the opportunity of consulting his friends before seeing her. He had accordingly named this afternoon at four o'clock, and now called us together to ask first, Whether we were of opinion that he ought to attempt to form a Ministry? secondly, Whether it should be on an enlarged basis, addressing himself first to members of the outgoing Government and afterwards to independent Liberals? lastly, Whether, if these attempts failed, he should undertake to form an Administration from among his own friends? The meeting were unanimously of opinion that he ought to attempt the formation of an Administration on an enlarged basis,—and almost unanimous that if he failed in that attempt he should undertake the Government with his own friends alone. Lord Bath alone expressed himself decidedly against the latter course. He said that he did not expect that Lord D. would succeed in getting the Whigs to join him; that he thought a pure Derbyite Government could not stand; and that the Whigs would reorganise themselves in opposition, turn us out, and come back under Gladstone and Bright. He urged Lord D. to hand over the task of forming a Government to Stanley, who would, he thought, unite the Whigs with us. General Peel said, "A council of war is said never to fight: I hope that won't be the case with this council. I hope we shall fight under our old commander; but for

my part, if he gives it up, I am ready to fight under my young friend here (Stanley), or any one else, against Gladstone and the democratic party." (This is important, for Peel was very much averse from the idea of a Stanley Government some time ago.) Dis. said he thought the chances of an alliance more promising than Lord Bath did. He would not go into details now. We must be prepared to make sacrifices for a junction. He for one was prepared to make the greatest sacrifices. (This was warmly cheered.) Every one spoke in turn, and Lord D. concluded by saying that he would go down and undertake to make the attempt. He said he should probably have to call on many of us to make sacrifices—especially if the Government was formed on a broad basis. This was generally felt, and assented to cheerfully.

June 29.—Called on W. E. G., who had expressed a wish to see me. He told me he had been considering the defects in the organisation of the Board of Treasury for some time, and had intended to propose some alterations if the late Government had continued in office. His idea is to constitute a board of five members,—the First Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, two Lords occupying the positions of the present Secretaries, and either the Vice-President of the Board of Trade or the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In addition, there should be three "assistant Lords nominated by the Lords, and not vacating their seats on appointment."

Called on Dis., and mentioned what W. E. G. had told me, adding that it might affect the arrangements for some

of the offices, and might also have a bearing on my own position. I began to say that he might naturally expect me to resume my old place of Financial Secretary, when he stopped me and said that he had told Lord D. that under any circumstances, and whether there were a fusion or not, he must make a point of my having a seat in the Cabinet; that Lord D. had expressed himself very kindly towards me, but had raised difficulties in respect of others having equal claims; that he (Dis.), however, had pointed out what he considered points of distinction, and had said that he must make my admission into the Cabinet a condition of his own taking office, so that the matter was quite settled. As to the particular office for me, of course he could say nothing yet; but he thought probably it would be the Board of Trade. He then went on to discuss the chances of a fusion, in which he does not himself believe. . . . Dis. thought we should gain little by addressing ourselves to the Adullamites in the House. Horsman would be a *mauvais coucheur*, and a troublesome colleague. Lowe's appointment would be rather too much of a challenge to the Reform party, and would look like the decided adoption of an anti-Reform policy, "while after all, perhaps, we may be the men to settle the question." But we were relieved of our difficulty by the forwardness of this party to announce that they would not take office under us.

July 1.—Received this evening Lord D.'s note offering me the Presidency of the Board of Trade and a seat in the Cabinet. Accepted.

July 6.—Went down to Windsor by special train with Lord Derby, Disraeli, Lord Chelmsford, Duke of Buckingham, Carnarvon, Malmesbury, Cranborne, General Peel, Walpole, J. Manners, Hardy, Pakington, Stanley, Duke of Montrose, Lord Abercorn, and Mowbray. Queen's carriages met us at the terminus and took us to the Castle. As we went up-stairs we met the late Ministers coming down, and shook hands with them. While we were waiting in the long room there was a sharp thunderstorm, and there was another while we were at luncheon after taking office. The slopes of the terrace looked as if there had been a fall of snow. Some thought this a bad omen for us. Dis. had a bad omen of his own as we came down; for, thinking there was a seat at the end of the saloon carriage, he sat down there, and found himself unexpectedly on the floor.

Lord D. was first sent for, and had a short audience. We were then all taken along the corridor to the door of a small room or rather closet. Lord Derby, Lord Chelmsford, and Walpole were called in; then the five new members of the Privy Council—Duke of Buckingham, Carnarvon, Cranborne, Hardy, and I—were called in together, and knelt before the Queen while we took the oath of allegiance; then we kissed hands, rose, and took the Privy Councillor's oath standing. The Queen then named the D. of B. Lord President of the Council, and we all retired. The Prince of Wales and Duke of Edinburgh were in the room. We were then called in one by one, and kissed hands on appointment to office, Lord

Derby going first, then the Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, the Secretaries of State (all together), the Chancellor of the Exchequer, &c. The Seals were delivered to all these (except the Lord President). Lord Derby then had a long audience with the Queen, while we went to luncheon. Returned by special train at four o'clock.

The swearing in was much less impressive than it is said to have been formerly. After being sworn, we shook hands with each Privy Councillor present. This, in a large room with a full Council, was no doubt a more solemn undertaking than in a Council of only three members, huddled up in a tiny room, with the rest outside the door.

The Queen seemed very cheerful, but said nothing except as to one or two details of arrangement.

July 7.—Attended our first Cabinet to-day. Lord D., Dis., Duke of Buckingham, Lord Chancellor, Malmesbury, Carnarvon, Cranborne, Walpole, General Peel, Stanley, Pakington, Hardy, Manners, and myself. Not a single Scotchman or Irishman among us.

Here the diary closes, but Sir Stafford's letters to Lady Northcote contain references to the turmoil of July in Hyde Park, when the railings were broken by the crowd, when Mr Beales, M.A., achieved his reputation, and when the Home Secretary, Mr Walpole, shed some natural tears. People who were then unborn may study the circumstances in Mr Carlyle's essay, "Shooting Niagara."

On July 23, Sir Stafford writes from the House: "We

are expecting to have all our heads broken to-night, as the mob are now trying it on in Hyde Park, and perhaps if they are defeated there, they will come on here." "I walked down Park Lane this morning" (July 25); "it is strange to see the railing entirely destroyed, or rather thrown down, and yet all the small wire fencing left untouched, and the flowers uninjured for the most part, though in some places they have been dug up and carried away." "The past week has been one of terrible anxiety, added to a good deal of work, and I scarcely yet feel as if the load was off one's mind, or would be for another day or two, though I hope now that things are going well. Walpole has not done altogether well, as regards manner, at all events; but he has been most unjustly attacked. People are not aware of the difficulties of the situation, or of the law of the case, and they seem to think there would have been more courage in putting other people's lives in peril than in bearing a certain amount of misconstruction and ridicule ourselves. It did at one time seem probable that we should have had to resort to very strong measures to-day, and that there would have been a serious collision and bloodshed; for that we should have been prepared if it had been necessary. But it was not for us to provoke the collision by menaces, when there was a possibility of averting it by conciliatory language; and as we have (or seem to have) carried our point by conciliation without concession, I think we may be well satisfied. However, I am still uncertain whether we are quite out of the wood."

They received "an awful warning that we are all to be

annihilated by an infernal machine," at the Mansion House, but it was deferred. Twenty pounds of gunpowder were found under the Victoria Tower (Aug. 8). "I have no doubt it is Lord Russell's doing."

The session ended peacefully after all, and he went down to Liverpool to make a speech at a dinner about the Atlantic Cable: "The dinner is to be at 6.30. I suppose I shall get through it somehow; but I feel as if I were going at a big fence with my reins nohow and my feet out of the stirrups. I have a great mass of undigested material, but shan't have got it into any kind of shape. I shall probably give deadly offence to at least half the claimants who set themselves up as the original projectors of the Cable, and very possibly I shan't please the other half. I am sure to disgust either the Canadians or the Nova Scotians about Confederation, and very likely both of them. As for President Johnson and the Republicans, I see my way very clearly into the ditch, and doubt whether it will be worth while to try to get out of it. I wanted Stanley to take the President's health, but he declines, saying it will be difficult—as if I didn't know that. Lord Derby sends me frantic cautions to say nothing about American politics, and says he is going to send me a letter, to be read at the dinner, containing the list of honours to be awarded."

There was a good deal of junketing to be endured at Liverpool, and in October he went further north, to Balmoral. A brief extract about life there may be permitted:—

"The life here is somewhat desultory, and indisposes one for work, though I have plenty that I ought to do. I am going out grouse-shooting with Colonel Ponsonby by-and-by, not that we shall have much chance of getting at the birds, now they have become so wild, but it will give us a walk and some good scenery. I dined with the Queen last night; there were the Queen, Prince and Princess Christian, Prince Arthur, Princess Louise, Dr Lee, Lady Ely, and myself. We got on very pleasantly, and the Queen was highly gracious. She was surprised to hear I had been here before; and her memory is so wonderful that I was surprised at her having forgotten it. I sat next to the Princess, and liked her very much. I had a little talk with Prince Arthur after dinner, and liked him. He is about the same age as Jack, and a nice spirited boy, wild about shooting, and causing Princess Christian great alarm for the safety of her husband, with whom he is to go out to-day. There has been a shocking accident at Mar Lodge; one of the keepers has shot himself, out deer-stalking. He seems to have been striking at a wounded deer with the butt-end of his rifle, the rifle being loaded, and the shock caused it to go off into his chest. It seems incomprehensible that a keeper should do such a thing. The Queen is very much grieved about it. The interest she takes in all her neighbours, and in everything about here, is very great."

"We had a great discussion on Walter Scott, Tennyson, &c., last night. The Queen particularly delights in 'In Memoriam.' . . . She is a great Tennysonian."

The other letters to Lady Iddesleigh and to Mr Disraeli, from Balmoral, are either of a purely private nature, or deal with questions of administration no longer interesting.

It is a very unlucky thing that Sir Stafford did not keep up his diary through the strange events of 1867, and especially at the moment of Lord Cranborne's secession, with General Peel and Lord Carnarvon, from Lord Derby's Government. His own attitude on the question which divided the Cabinet, the question of Reform, was merely and simply that of his chiefs. He did not want to lower the franchise, any more than they desired it. But he was no more inclined than they to divorce the Conservative party from the current of affairs, and with the party he took that leap into the dark, the dark which was not so Egyptian but that any one might have perceived our present through it, and even somewhat of our future. He let the great current take him to the sea, the sea in which we are tossed about to-day. Documents are wanting, then, as to any private struggle of mind through which he may have passed. It is only plain that he stuck to Mr Disraeli. A letter of February 29, 1867, clearly refers to some momentous conversation with that leader, a letter in which he observes that he is "penitent for the awkward way in which I stumbled over what I meant or wished to say when I left you this morning. Pretty speeches don't come readily, when one really means to say a great deal. . . . I can assure you that I look back upon our nine years' friendship with lively feelings of

satisfaction and gratitude, and forward with confident hope that we have got many such years before us." And he signs himself, "Your attached and affectionate, S. H. N."[1] On March 1 there is just a hint, in a note of one line, about an attempt to prevent the disruption of the Cabinet: "I have spent an hour with our friend: he is much distressed, but, I fear, immovable." On March 2 came a note from Mr Disraeli, offering, in Lord Derby's name, the place of Secretary for India: "Send your answer to him, and at once." The answer, of course, was "Yes," and Sir Stafford entered at once on the great office, which he held so worthily in critical times. As to Reform, he had gone with the stream of history. His habitual and almost proverbial hopefulness enabled him to see a happy future for England and our enfranchised working class, especially as the influence of the Conservative party "has been used almost always on the side of labour and of the working man."[2]

[1] Though it has nothing to do with the case, I cannot help quoting a letter of Mr Disraeli's, whose butler had assured Sir Stafford that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not see him. "My dinner, a tapioca pudding, should not have interfered, but my butler is a pompous booby."

[2] Speech at Bristol, November 5, 1867.

CHAPTER IX.

THE INDIAN SECRETARYSHIP.

GREAT DIFFICULTIES OF THE SECRETARY'S POSITION—SIR STAFFORD'S ACCOUNT OF IT — POLITICS OF INDIA: FAMINE, FINANCE, NATIVE STATES, "FEDERATION," AFGHANISTAN—ABYSSINIA—LETTERS TO SIR JOHN LAWRENCE—TO MR MASSEY—IRRIGATION—INDIAN BUDGET—HIS CONTEMPT OF ANGLO-INDIAN SELFISHNESS—LETTER FROM LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK—REPLY—THE INDIAN BUDGET—THE ORISSA FAMINE—"VENEERING BLAME"—THE POSITION OF THE NATIVES AND THE CIVIL SERVICE—SUGGESTIONS—THE MYSORE SUCCESSION—THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER—AFGHANISTAN — THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION — THE PAYMENT OF INDIAN TROOPS—DIFFERENCES WITH SIR JOHN LAWRENCE — LETTER TO SIR ROBERT NAPIER — BRITISH SUCCESS — MR DISRAELI'S RECEPTION OF THE NEWS—SIR STAFFORD'S SHARE IN THE SUCCESS—HIS MODESTY—HIS GIFT TO INDIA—THE SULTAN'S BALL—LATER CONSEQUENCES AND CRITICISM OF THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION — FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT—BALMORAL—SIR STAFFORD'S ELECTION IN NORTH DEVON — REMARKS ON IRELAND.

WHEN Sir Stafford Northcote became Secretary of State for India, he undertook a task of which the labour and difficulty may be faintly appreciated by his biographer. Whoever has been suddenly thrust into the jungle of

despatches, letters, minutes, and reports, about matters altogether foreign and mysterious to him, about the countless affairs of our gigantic and heterogeneous oriental dependency, can understand the troubles of the new Indian Secretary of State. When Sir Stafford took office, he had no special knowledge of Eastern matters, and his time was devoured by the claims of home politics, by the labours of the Conservative party in its then usual uncomfortable tenure of precarious office. In the letters of the year, we find Sir Stafford frequently stating that he has scarce any leisure for his vast and complicated task. Yet he tackled his business with his usual clear-headedness, he made himself acquainted almost at once with the ins and outs, the rights and wrongs of many serious and obscure questions, and in this new office, as always, it was his business to keep throwing oil on troubled waters, and smoothing the asperities of men animated by the most contending interests. To the student who comes fresh to these topics, the marvel is that Indian government goes on at all, and that a single English statesman can acquire, in the brief and anxious time of office which party Government allots to him, the necessary amount of knowledge, and can bestow the necessary amount of attention.

Probably one cannot give a better account of Sir Stafford's position than he gave to Parliament himself, when introducing the "Government of India Act Amendment Bill" (April 23, 1868). "We have endeavoured to govern India by means of an executive machinery in India,

subject to a controlling machinery in England." At the centre of that controlling machinery in England sat Sir Stafford, as the Indian Secretary of State in Council. The Council consists, or then consisted, of fifteen men, most of whom had served in India. Half are elected, half nominated by the Crown: they hold their offices for life; they advise, and to a certain extent control the Secretary of State. The difficulties of the position are manifest. The world has its own opinion of what old Anglo-Indians are like, and, to use language which would not have been parliamentary twenty years ago, they are apt to be considered fogies. "I believe that, in some quarters," said Sir Stafford, ". . . an impression prevails that the Council are more or less of a useless, and even of an obstructive character, . . . not only an ungenerous but a very untruthful account of the matter. . . . Combined with the amount of work they do as departmental officers, they afford most valuable assistance as advisers to the Secretary of State." That unenvied official has commonly no personal knowledge of India to start with, yet "he is called upon to superintend and control the governors of an enormous empire at the other side of the world, upon thousands of details, embracing every class of business. He is at once charged with military duties, with financial duties, with the duties of home administration, with foreign affairs, with judicial affairs, with the management of great railways, and other public works." Sir Stafford did not add, that he had also, as it were, "to fight with beasts," in the shape of persons who wanted

tickets for the Sultan's ball, with persons who desired decorations, and were eager that the proverbial "Dowb" should be remembered; that he had to keep the peace between peppery generals and governors, labouring under the heat of the weather and the ravages of a dilapidated liver. Such are the duties of an Indian Secretary of State, and if he had not his Council to instruct him, his condition would be all the more ungracious. But Sir Stafford always declined to shun responsibility under the shield of his Council. In a private letter, he remarks that he will not play Adam to their Eve, and say "the Council thou gavest to be with me tempted me." In more dignified language he told the House of Commons that an Indian Secretary "may shelter himself, by pleading that it is not he but the Council that is responsible. But, in the first place, this is not strictly true." Without anticipating the future by following this discourse any farther here, I quote so much of it that the reader may learn, from Sir Stafford's own words, something of what were the duties and sorrows of the Indian Secretary.

The particular questions with which Sir Stafford had to cope were many and serious. Fortunately for him, Lord Lawrence was then Viceroy; a personal acquaintance, Sir Seymour Fitzgerald, was at Bombay; in Madras was Lord Napier.[1] With all of them, despite the clash of provincial and personal interests and the contention of opinion, Sir Stafford maintained most friendly intercourse. The chief points which continually demanded

[1] Now Napier and Ettrick.

his attention were in the long-run financial, and with finance he was at home. The dreadful famine in Orissa (1865-66), wherein an uncounted multitude of people perished, had shaken our confidence in our own administration, and remains a horror and a shame in the memory. To provide against the recurrence of so terrible a calamity, public works—for example, canals, irrigation, and railroads—were needed. All these schemes demanded money. And whence was the money to come? how was it to be provided? There instantly arose problems about the financial control then exercised over the provinces by the Governor-General. In this matter the ideas of Sir John Lawrence were naturally not very reconcilable with those of the governors of presidencies, nor indeed with those of Sir Stafford Northcote himself. Part of this problem, again, was the relation of the supreme Government of India to the local government of Bengal. Here once more Sir John Lawrence had to be coped with. Again, the difficulties of taxation were great; for the Europeans in India consistently disliked to pay taxes themselves, while they were generously eager to tax the natives. To get money by an income-tax, if that would be tolerated, was the natural and desirable expedient; but even the licence-tax which, in default of an income-tax, was imposed, caused Anglo-Indian "indignation meetings" to howl. As to the much-needed public works again, some were being attempted by companies, as by the Orissa water company; but the task was reckoned beyond their strength, and there

were endless and tedious negotiations for the transfer of their plant to Government. Schemes for borrowing in support of public works had to be devised, and for making the works as far as possible and as soon as possible remunerative. The financial troubles were complicated by the recent failure of the Bombay Bank, by the necessity to reorganise a bank in Bombay, and by Sir Stafford's natural reluctance to involve the Government in the affairs of this institution.

Such, roughly speaking, were the more pressing questions of ways and means: the means were required to prevent more famines; the ways had to be discovered.

In foreign politics there was the Afghan trouble—then peculiarly troublesome, as Afghanistan was divided between various pretenders, who cast hopeful glances, now at England, now at Russia and Persia. On all this business Sir Stafford mainly agreed with Sir John Lawrence. He, as every one knows, was an advocate of back, not of forward, play. His policy was to recognise, as completely as possible, every Afghan chief of power, any successful man who was capable of reaching the throne and remaining there. He was entirely averse to making the Afghans superfluously hostile by military interference within their borders. So far, Sir Stafford was in agreement with the Governor-General. The question is not one on which an amateur should offer an opinion, beyond remarking that, in Central Asia as in cricket, back play is good and forward play is good; what is bad is being caught "in two minds."

There were also problems as to our relations with native princes. A difficulty in a native State, the succession to the State of Mysore, where the ruler was childless, but had adopted an infant, at that moment occupied the Indian Secretary. In his despatches on this topic, Sir Stafford showed a judicial attitude of mind and a strong repugnance to the "special pleading" (a cynic might borrow the term "pettifogging") which he thought he detected in the policy of his predecessor Lord Cranborne.

The unfortunate position of the missionaries and of the representative of England in Abyssinia, was a point in foreign affairs which caused trouble and anxiety enough to the Secretary of State. He proved an unfaltering supporter of Sir Robert Napier (Lord Napier of Magdala), and the very laborious and expensive Abyssinian expedition was undertaken successfully. These matters, with the question of place for natives of India in the Civil Service of India, are the chief things of moment which occupied Sir Stafford in the course of his Indian Secretaryship. It has appeared well to state them briefly by way of a beginning, and before offering the details of his management. Even in this place it may be said generally that his policy was generous, warm-hearted (where the needs of the people of India were concerned), and clear-sighted, as is proved by the success of the ideas he adopted as to the financial relations of the presidencies with the supreme Government.

For the better understanding of Sir Stafford's Indian

administration, it may be well to take each of the various important points separately, as each is treated in his official correspondence. In his letters to the Governor-General, and to the other Indian authorities, the same subjects are constantly recurring, and there is consequently a necessary sameness in his remarks. A chronological order in which the points are studied as they occur is therefore inconvenient here, and it is best to treat of each Indian question separately.

To begin with the relations, and especially the relations of financial control, between the supreme Government and the presidencies, the business is briefly put, by Sir John and General Richard Strachey in their 'Finances and Public Works of India' (p. 136).

"For many years the ordinary financial condition of India had been one of chronic deficit; and the main cause of this state of affairs was the impossibility of resisting the constantly increasing demands of the local governments for the means of providing every kind of improvement in the administrations of their respective provinces. Their demands were practically unlimited, because there was almost no limit to their legitimate wants, and the local governments had no means of knowing the measure by which their annual demands upon the Government of India ought to be regulated. They had a purse to draw upon of unlimited, because of unknown, depth. . . . They found by experience that the less economy they practised, and the more important their demands, the more likely they were to persuade the Government of India of the urgency of their requirements."

Again, General Strachey writes:—

"The distribution of the public income degenerates into something like a scramble, in which the most violent has the advan-

tage, with very little attention to reason: as local economy leads to no local advantage, the stimulus to avoid waste is reduced to a minimum."

Once more:—

"Constant differences of opinion about petty details of expenditure, and constant interference of the Government of India in matters of trivial importance, brought with them, as a necessary consequence, frequent conflicts with the local government. . . . The relations between the supreme and local governments were thoroughly inharmonious."

Lord Cranborne produced, in illustration of this, a comic case of a correspondence between the supreme and a local government as to fixing up pegs in a soldiers' swimming-bath, and on this momentous topic letters pass between Sir Stafford Northcote and Sir John Lawrence. In these circumstances, the local governments (if they were even to nail up pegs in swimming-baths) needed "a larger measure of financial responsibility and power." Papers on this subject were written by General Strachey in 1867, and with his views Sir Stafford agreed from the beginning. Thus, on April 10, 1867, he writes to Sir Seymour Fitzgerald:—

"I hope you will do whatever you can to set matters right with the Government of India. Your relations are delicate, and great care is needed. I think myself that it would be very advantageous if we could put the local governments upon something like an allowance, and let them manage their own expenditure within certain limits. The present system does not strike me as one likely to produce economy; because feeling that you are under the

control of the Government of India neutralises the feeling of responsibility, and tends to make your Government reckless as to what they propose, and so to bring about a corresponding disposition on the part of the Government of India to treat you as spendthrifts who must be kept in check."

The uncomfortable relations of a stern parent with extravagant progeny were thus, by the then existing system, established between the Governor-General and the governments of the presidencies.

The relations of the supreme Government and the government of Bengal were parts of the general problem, and in consulting Lord Napier on those points, Sir Stafford repeats his remarks on the "allowancing" of the local governments. On August 15, Sir Stafford wrote to Sir John Lawrence about these ideas, and about the alternative course, which is rendered impossible by the magnificent freedom of our boasted institutions. I quote the passage at length, for its general instructiveness.

"I should also much like to know what changes you think might advantageously be made in our system in India. My own ideas point to—1st, a remodelling of the Bengal Presidency administration; 2d, a partial decentralisation of the whole system of Indian government; 3d, the adoption of some principles of finance which may render the execution of public works on a great scale easier; and 4th, a more systematic employment of natives in the Civil Service.

"1. As regards Bengal, my impression is that it would be well to separate the less advanced districts, such as Orissa and Assam, from Bengal proper, and to place them under commissioners on a non-regulation system. Sir C. Beadon tells me that this is a retrograde policy; but I am not sure that it is necessarily wrong on that account. I do not want to de-Bengalise Bengal itself, but are we not misapplying its peculiar system when we carry it into such districts as those I have mentioned?

"Whether the chief of the Bengal Presidency should be a governor sent out from England, like the governors of Madras and Bombay, or a lieutenant-governor drawn from the ranks of the Civil Service, is a question upon which I do not feel at all clear. The answer must greatly depend upon the maintenance or the abandonment of the close connection between the Government of India and that of Calcutta. If Calcutta is to be the capital of India, you cannot have a really independent government of Bengal. Ought, then, Calcutta to be the capital? That depends, I think, upon the question, On what principles is India to be administered? Is it to be governed on English or on Indian principles? Are we to endeavour to impress our own character on the people, or to adapt our institutions to their characters, and, it may be, to their weaknesses? Are we to centralise or to localise? These are not easy questions to answer, or perhaps I should say, they are questions which it is easy to answer either way. It seems natural to say—A Christian nation, a nation professing what it

believes to be the highest form of civilisation, ought to apply itself to christianise and civilise those who have been committed to its charge. It has obtained a certain foothold in that portion of the empire where the English capital is situated, and from that vantage-ground it can best proceed to assimilate the rest of India to its ideas. It may apply itself to the development of education, the improvement of law, the introduction of a European tone into the institutions of the metropolitan presidency, and may trust to the gradual extension of the influence of the metropolitan element throughout the rest of the country. I am not sure that if England were the reverse of what she is, this might not be the right policy. But it would require an iron will to carry it into effect. You would need a Strafford with his policy of 'Thorough.' You must be prepared to find that; in order to accomplish a benevolent purpose, you would have to do many things extremely disagreeable to the objects of your benevolence; that you would have to improve a good many of them off the face of the earth; and that your means would often come to be very unworthy of your ends. Perhaps in the long-run the policy, pursued with sufficient vigour, might succeed, and the result might be worth the cost; but it is pretty certain that a Government like that of England, with its House of Commons and its free press, and a telegraphic communication which brings India within a few hours of our door, never will pursue such a policy with any vigour at all.

"I look, therefore, to the opposite policy: that of

localising our administration as much as possible, and adapting it to the wants and the prejudices of each district, introducing our own ideas with great caution and forbearance.

"2. For this purpose, I should say, decentralise, and especially remove our seat of government from Bengal. Let Bengal have a thoroughly well-organised government of its own, and give it a sufficient amount of freedom of action to make up for the loss of the imperial position. I do not quite know where the seat of the suprême Government should be; but I think, wherever it is, the Governor-General ought from time to time to visit different parts of India to see with his own eyes what the local governments are doing, to learn their wants and to take counsel with them, and to invigorate them with his presence and advice. If a good division of work and responsibility could in the first instance be made, if it could be decided what classes of questions must be reserved for the supreme Government, and what should be left to the presidency governments, I think we should be in a fair way to solve the problem of the administration. I cannot think that the presidency governments ought to be under the entire control and direction of the supreme Government. I think they should have certain duties and functions assigned to them, for the due discharge of which they should be directly responsible to the home Government, which would naturally exercise a very moderate amount of self-control. I would let the presidency governors appoint their own councils,

and make them directly responsible for all their actions. In like manner I would let the Viceroy appoint the supreme council, and make him absolute in all matters which were reserved for the supreme Government, responsible of course to the home Government, but in no way fettered by his own council. He should, of course, be required to consult his councillors, and they should be entitled to put on record their opinions. He might also assign particular departments to them, and allow them to manage those departments so long as he was satisfied with them. As regards members of council to be appointed from England, it would probably be well that the Secretary of State should continue to nominate one or two. But this is a point for consideration.

"3. The decentralising system would, of course, carry with it some provision for giving to the local governments certain powers of raising local taxes and regulating local expenditure within given limits. I should like to consider how far this change could be made to fit in with my notion that advances for public works should be made on a footing analogous to that of our Exchequer loans or our drainage loans. If the central Treasury advanced £500,000 (say) to Bombay to be expended in reproductive works, Bombay might be required to repay the amount in twenty or thirty years by way of terminable annuity, and the central Treasury could lend out the money as it came in, to fresh works, perhaps there, perhaps in another presidency, on the same terms, so that the money would never be idle. The

presidency in which the works were executed might have the whole, or a fixed proportion, of the profit to be derived from them in aid of its local revenue. All this will require careful consideration, but I wish to know how far the idea commends itself to you.

"4. As regards the admission of natives to the Covenanted Service, I am considering whether we ought not to have examinations in India, and select, say, five or ten young natives a-year for the Civil Service, who should then come over and complete their education in England. I cannot, however, enter fully into this question just now.—I remain, &c.,

"STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE."

In some of these opinions, Sir John Lawrence was not at one with Sir Stafford Northcote. A man in Sir John's position feels the need of being strong. He may well be pardoned if he hankers (though it is not meant that Sir John hankered) after the policy of "Thorough." Necessarily he must dislike whatever removes authority from his grasp, and a greater measure of freedom for the local governments must mean weakness to him. He opposes decentralisation because a man who is at the centre is always likely to oppose it. Yet the policy, on the whole, appears to have been successful. But as a Special Committee was sitting at home on the organisation of the Bengal Government, Sir Stafford writes to Lord Napier and Ettrick: "I am anxious to get them to agree to the assignment of a special amount of revenue for local

purposes to the different presidency governments." In a letter (October 28) to Mr Massey, whose Budget "was a grief to him," he states his theory with more details.

"My own ideas tend very much to the ultimate, if not the immediate, separation of the general from the local finance of India. I should like to see the debt, the military charges, the railway system, post-office, mint, telegraph, law and justice, ecclesiastical and possibly educational expenses, and so forth, charged to India generally, and placed as much as possible under the direct control of the supreme Government. To meet these charges I would assign to the Government of India the customs, salt, opium, and perhaps the *abkarry* (*i.e.*, excise) revenues, with a further power of calling upon the presidency governments to contribute *pro rata* as much as was necessary to meet the expenditure, which the items I have named would hardly do. Then I would leave to the presidency governments their land revenue and what they could raise by direct taxation, and let them manage their own system of collecting it, their own civil administration, and, subject to certain restrictions, their own public works. I have not attempted to work out the scheme, and it is not quite fair to throw a rough suggestion of this kind in the matter, where everything turns upon details, loosely down. I mention it, however, to show you in what direction I am looking. I am strongly impressed with the necessity for strengthening the Government of India by relieving it of all the work which the presidency govern-

ments can properly do themselves; and I believe the presidency governments will work better if they have a little more latitude and a little more responsibility. I would of course place them under the general control of the Government of India, would not allow them to impose any new taxes without its consent, and would call on them to submit estimates of their expenditure, and special estimates of great works, as well as vouchers after the fact. I would so regulate their contributions to the general Treasury as to leave a good balance in the hands of the Government of India; and I would try to establish a system of advances to them out of the general Treasury for approved works, to be repaid by them with interest in a given number of years, on a plan somewhat similar to that of our Exchequer loans and drainage advances. The money so repaid might be lent out over again, and in that way a permanent fund would be created for the maintenance and carrying on of public works.

"There would probably be some difficulty in establishing the basis upon which the *pro rata* contributions were to be made. The amount of the land revenue (gross) would seem at first sight to be the fairest test of ability; but the existence of the permanent settlement here and there makes it almost inapplicable. I am not sure that the fairest test would not really be that of local expenditure. Thus, if Bombay spends 4 millions on the local administration, local works, and other local objects, while Madras and Bengal spend 3 millions on the same objects, and the North-West Provinces spend 2 millions, and the

Punjab 1½ millions,—then when you called on Bombay for 4 lacs contribution to the general Treasury, you would call on Madras for 3 lacs, the North-West Provinces for 2 lacs—and so on. The effect ought to be to produce greater economy in the local expenditure. But whether such a scheme would be accepted, and would work, I can hardly judge."

The precise points at issue between Sir Stafford and Sir John Lawrence may be gathered from this extract of a letter to Sir John (October 28, 1867):—

"Mr Maine (Sir Henry Sumner Maine) does not like the ideas which, as I mentioned to you, our Special Committee are propounding. I think he is right in his objections, and I hope he will convince the Committee, for I should like to have the support of their report in anything I may propose, though I should not scruple to act on my own judgment if necessary. I think Arbuthnot and Frere, whose opinions I value the most, are much inclined to agree with Mr Maine. The majority of the Committee say, 'Let Calcutta be the capital, fix the Council there, and let the Governor-General go about by himself, as was the practice formerly.' You say, as I understand, 'Let Calcutta be the capital, but don't fix the Council there; let the Governor-General and his Council keep together, and go about as occasion may require.' This is my own view, and I think that, if this system were adopted, the chief seat of Government would by degrees gravitate to some point other than Calcutta—perhaps to Poona, perhaps to Agra, perhaps to some other place. Mr Maine suggests the

spending of a certain portion of the year at Lucknow. But as a complement to this arrangement I would strengthen the hands of the Government of India by relieving it of a good deal of the detail which now encumbers, and, as I believe, weakens it. I think the sound official rule of never doing yourself what you can get a subordinate to do efficiently for you applies to this case. If certain matters can be effectively and safely dealt with by the presidency governments, the Government of India ought not to be burdened with them. I am by no means a violent decentraliser. I think that on certain points we should centralise and on other points localise. The difficulty is, to say which system should be adopted in each case.

"Now here is this irrigation question. I am altogether opposed to such centralisation as Colonel Strachey looks to. He need not be afraid of my taking a half-and-half view. I think Madras ought to be put upon its mettle, and held responsible for doing its work effectually in its own way. But then it must be able to command the means. If it is to submit all its plans to the criticism and disallowance of the Government of India, and if the Government of India is to alter one detail, and top off another, and defer a third, then it would be better that the Government of India should take the whole responsibility and do the work. My answer, therefore, to your question about Colonel Strachey is, 'Let us first settle whether the presidency governments are to have any, and what amount of, independent financial authority, and then

we can say what should be the position of the director of irrigation work towards them."

Sir John replied (December 7) that the central Government must have powers of control, and that he had always to be interfering with the Bombay government. The obvious answer is, that the proposed changes were urged simply to prevent the necessity of those endless discords. Sir Stafford tells Lord Napier that, "I would go somewhat further towards what you would call a federation than you think feasible." But at this time the majority of the India Council at home seems to have been opposed to the reforming ideas.

The proposal to lighten the duties of the Governor-General by making Bengal a separate government was defeated in Council on December 18. "The newspapers," says Sir Stafford, "seem to be writing a great deal of nonsense about Americanising the institutions of India; but," he adds, characteristically, "there is no use in making one's self unhappy about them." He himself had adopted the view of the minority of the Council, "that it was desirable that the government of Bengal should be erected into a presidency, on the footing of Madras or Bombay," and this was part of his confirmed general theory that "the Government of India should be detached from local administration."[1] But he did not give his vote in Council on this side, because he was in communication with Sir John Lawrence, whose opinion was adverse to the change. As to the proposed alteration

[1] Speech on Government of India Bill, April 23, 1868.

of financial responsibility, Sir Stafford's last remark in Parliament on the topic, while he was Secretary, merely expressed his hopefulness that his ideas, formulated by Mr Massey, would in the long-run prevail. To Lord Mayo was reserved the task of beginning all that Sir Stafford hoped would be done.[1]

Turning to another financial question, that of Indian taxation, it is particularly worthy of remark that Sir Stafford was most anxious, as much as possible, to shift the burdens of the poor (who are not always very articulate in India) on to the broader but reluctant shoulders of the very articulate rich. Here, of course, he was quite in unison with Sir John Lawrence.

When Sir Stafford came into office, Mr Massey (the financial member of Council) had just put forth his Budget. There was a deficit—there was need of additional taxation.[2] Mr Massey proposed a licence-tax on trades and professions, "intended to reach those large classes of persons who, in spite of their considerable wealth, had hitherto managed to shirk their share of the public burdens." There were inconvenient details, and the hurrying through Council of the measure was justly unpopular. Hence, perhaps, more excuse than usual for Anglo-Indian excitement. An income-tax was what Sir John Lawrence and Sir Stafford desired; but, as Sir John writes (March 28, 1867), "the English community have objected to the income-tax. . . . The non-official Eng-

[1] Strachey, 'Finances and Public Works of India,' 139.

[2] Bosworth Smith, 'Life of Lord Lawrence,' ii. 515 *et seq.*

lish community desire that all taxation should fall on the natives, and more especially on the poorer classes. . . . The English community almost universally lend their influence in favour of increased expenditure of various kinds. But when it comes to taxation to meet the extra cost, they resist their share of the burden."

This was the attitude which filled Sir Stafford with indignation and disgust. "With regard to the licence-tax," he writes to Sir John Lawrence, "ought it not to have been carried up to a higher point? It will let the richest classes off rather easily." Later, "I am ashamed of the combined readiness to borrow and unwillingness to be taxed which the Indian public is manifesting." Again, to Mr Massey he writes, "An income-tax would have been better than a licence-tax; and if you were to have a licence-tax, you should have carried it up to a much higher point. You might have tried the licence-tax upon a bolder scale, making it a real income-tax upon the trading classes, and carrying it up to a point so high as to hit the rich as much as the poor. . . . I cannot conceive a reason for taxing the higher salaries more lightly than the lower."

Among Indian questions of internal administration one of the most important was that of public works, especially as to irrigation canals and railways. Improved means of communication were most urgently needed, not only for the movements of troops, but even more, at that moment, for the supply of food in case of scarcity. The Orissa famine had frightened every one into energy, and it is

plain that irrigation, in a country like India, is one of the first needs of agriculture. In an interesting letter of June 18, 1867, Lord Napier gave Sir Stafford some account of what had been done for irrigation by the ancient civilised races of India.

What strikes me is the extent to which the old native governments had occupied the localities fit for irrigatorial purposes. The country [South Arcot and Chingleput] is a perfect network of tanks and channels. Many of those ancient works are, no doubt, out of repair, and some might be restored and developed by our better science. The superior knowledge of *levels* that we possess will enable us to draw supplies of water to reservoirs from distant intermittent streams. But many of the old reservoirs, breached and dry, are hardly worth restoring: they are filled and silted up, and the basin is too shallow to contain water. The work of excavation would be too expensive, the wet cultivation would not give a sufficient interest on the outlay. When you hear of *hundreds* of old irrigation works in ruins, you may make a large abatement. When the number is analysed, that of really valuable and available ones diminishes notably. I have always found this. And again, when the tank or reservoir cannot be united to a considerable stream which flows from the Western Ghauts, or at least from the interior of the country to the eastern seaboard, such a reservoir cannot be regarded as a reliable famine-saving tank. The minor stream and minor catchment-basins depend on the local rainfall of the year. If the rain does not come at the proper time, the channel and reservoir may all be in perfect order, but they will remain dry, and the wet culture will fail for that year. . . . Nevertheless these local works are most valuable. . . . It is in the extension of irrigation in the three deltas, and in the repair and extension of the old local works, well selected, that we shall do most profitably. I greatly doubt the large undertakings . . . .being profitable to the revenue. It may be

that they should be undertaken, but they should be submitted to strict inquiry, and undertaken as works of mercy not of profit.

I assure you that in speaking thus, I speak against my sentiments. It is impossible to ride through the provinces as I have done, and as I mean to do, without being inflamed with admiration or impatience, on seeing the old native works, here in beneficent operation, there in dilapidation and decay. The benefits of water to this country are so substantial and so charming, that it is impossible to see the spectacle of irrigation unmoved. There is a green luxuriant country, with a fat contented people, where the water reaches; beyond, an arid, brown, parched expanse, with deplorable hovels, and emaciated inhabitants in rags. I saw the contrast of the green and brown regions admirably last year in the Godavery district: it seemed as if you passed in one step from opulence to desolation. But it is the very beauty and seduction of irrigation that should make us careful and incredulous. We are in no danger of undervaluing it now. . . .

This extract from Lord Napier's letter gives a most vivid picture of what irrigation can do, and in the ancient days had done, for India. If we are to occupy that country at all, we should certainly not fall behind the civilisation of governments which we are too apt to despise.

On the topic of irrigation, Sir Stafford wrote thus to Lord Napier. He felt himself obliged not to be too enthusiastic, as the Government would be working with borrowed money. His constant desire to make use of the services of the natives of India, declares itself in the close of the letter.

"*May* 16, 1867.

"My dear Lord,—I have read your letter on the irrigation question with very great interest. It is most

valuable, and I entirely concur with your views. I hope I am not too sceptical about irrigation, but I own that I cannot bring myself up to 'concert pitch' with some of my friends on the subject. My belief is that there are districts in which immense good may be done by it, and that really well-considered schemes will prove highly remunerative as well as highly beneficial. But I cannot bring myself to think that it is the one panacea for all the ills of India. I believe that as a general measure the improvement of our communications is of still greater importance. There seem to me to be two classes of irrigation favourers, the speculators and the sensationalists. Both have got hold of a truth, but both are for riding their hobby too fast and too far. The speculators think that a great gain is to be made by developing the resources of a country which might be made more productive than it is. They are no doubt quite right in this so far as regards certain parts of it, and certain well-digested projects; but they are quite wrong when they generalise in the wild way which some of them seem disposed to do. Unless they are very carefully watched and criticised, they will on the whole waste and throw away at least as much capital as they will employ to a profit. This perhaps would not signify if the matter were left to private enterprise. The success of A. and B. will tempt Y. and Q. to enter upon the same field. Y. and Q. may lose their money; and ultimately L. M. and N. will learn a lesson as to the limits within which enterprises of this kind are profit-

able, and as to the conditions under which they can be undertaken. But if the speculators are backed up by the Government they will be much longer in learning their lesson, and the Government will have to bear heavy losses unless we are extremely careful and even strait-laced in our proceedings. And this decision to borrow money for our works will have a tendency to make Government less careful than it would otherwise be compelled to be. I am most thankful that you are exercising such vigilance. Then, again, the sensational school come down upon us with exhortations to irrigate India, and so put an end to the possibility of famines. Is the whole country available for irrigation? Are the people likely to make use of it in districts where, in nineteen years out of twenty, they have as much rain as they require? and if they do not, what is to happen to them in the twentieth year? It seems to me that the great preservative against these exceptional calamities is to be found in an adequate development of our system of communications, so that in an emergency the wants of one district may be supplied by the abundance of another. . . . I should like to know how far it is possible to employ natives. There must be a good deal of engineering talent among them; but whether they would ever be fit to take command of works is perhaps a question. . . ."

The official scepticism of this letter is reflected in Sir Stafford's speech on the Indian Budget (August 12, 1867). He acknowledges the energy with which Lord Cranborne

pushed the schemes of improving land and saving life during his brief time at the India Office. "I am sure that upon this head there is no one to whom India owes a greater debt of gratitude." "While irrigation works should be pushed forward vigorously, yet we must be very prudent as to the mode in which we carry out the necessary policy." It was occasionally difficult to get labourers, and there was peril of entering on improvident schemes. "If you send out engineers, you will find able but sanguine men who see everything in rosy colours." But no great work, one might reply, has ever been done by a "doon-hearted loon," as the Ettrick Shepherd phrases it. However, Sir Stafford was afraid that engineers might recommend works which time would prove to be "financially delusive." He quoted the differing estimates of the Bellary scheme from Lord Napier, showing how much more money was required for a much less area than had been anticipated. But the attention of the Indian Government had been roused, and the Indian Government would be supported at home. It had been determined to charge the expenses for irrigation "not to income but to capital," and there followed the details of the borrowing, and the distribution of the sums.

On the whole, Sir Stafford did not belong, as, being financially responsible, he could hardly afford to belong, to the romantic school of irrigators. But who can help longing for the success of that school, and for changing the desert into a garden, the pinched folk of the hovels into a "fat contented people"!

It is with great reluctance that one is obliged to return to the topic of the Orissa famine. Sir Stafford was said to have "veneered the blame all over India." The natural man would prefer to have hanged somebody, several persons in fact, to encourage the others. "There was only one single person in Orissa" (Mr. Barlow), Mr Bosworth Smith says, "and he only with a very subordinate authority, who kept his eyes open, and did his duty at a time when it was not too late to guard against the worst." Only one person among the servants of England who did his duty! And he was "browbeaten into silence for a short period by the rebukes of his superiors." To have hanged the superiors, to have crucified the Board of Revenue at Calcutta, to have "scalped Beadon," would have been a mild but satisfactory act of justice. However, it is the biographer's business to give Sir Stafford's own views in his own words, and not to say what should have been done in a state *κατ' εὐχήν*.

Here follows Sir Stafford's letter to Sir John Lawrence, written after reading the report of the Famine Commission:—

"*May* 16, 1867.

"MY DEAR SIR JOHN LAWRENCE,—I have read the able report of the Famine Commission with the most painful interest. It seems to me a very valuable document, and one from which we ought to learn a great deal. The famine has sought out the weak points in our administrative system, and the report brings them very clearly to light. What principally strikes me is the want of direct com-

munications between the responsible government and the officers who were best acquainted with the real state of affairs. The interposition of the Board of Revenue between Mr Ravenshaw and the government of Bengal strikes me as the most unfortunate feature in the whole case. Mr Barlow's energetic representations are filtered through the medium of an incredulous Board, and lose all their flavour before they reach the government. The Board and Mr Ravenshaw support each other in their incredulity, and they get of course the support of the Government, which acts on their information. Poor Mr Barlow is stifled by the mass of authority brought to bear against him, well adorned too with maxims of political economy. It is scarcely wonderful that he succumbs. He is a victim to the official demon who is the parent of so much evil amongst us, and whose rule of conduct is—

'Fungi officio taliter qualiter.'

"The Barlow of the end of February is not the Barlow of November or even of January. The consequence is, that when the Lieutenant-Governor comes to Pooree, Mr Barlow makes no more of his energetic representations, and Sir C. Beadon is justified in saying that it was not suggested to him in the course of his visit that there was a necessity for importation. But how wonderful it is that after Mr Barlow had written to Mr Ravenshaw in such language as he uses on the 1st of February, and after Mr Ravenshaw had sent such a telegram as that of the 31st January, it should be possible for the Lieutenant-Governor,

arriving on the 13th February, to be able to say (as he did in his minute of January 5, 1867) that, 'I was in frequent communication with the Commissioner, with the Collector of Pooree, &c., and nothing transpired to show that it was supposed by any one either that there was not sufficient food in the province for the subsistence of the population, or that employment for the able-bodied, aided by private charity, would not suffice to support both the able-bodied and the helpless poor'! Did he ever put a direct question on the point to Mr Ravenshaw or Mr Barlow? Did nothing pass as to the proposal to pay wages in grain? Mr Ravenshaw seems to have shown inexcusable weakness at this time, and I suppose that, backed up by the opinion of the Board of Revenue, he had lapsed again into his original view that there was grain enough in the country, and thought the less he said about the telegram of January 31 the better; but Mr Barlow is apparently a man of more vigour, and no doubt he would have spoken out if he had not been persuaded that it was useless. The action of the Revenue Board seems to have enfeebled the stronger man, and added to the weakness of the weaker. The view taken by the Commission of the causes of weakness in the Bengal Government is interesting. It seems to me that it would be well to take this opportunity of considering whether there should be any revision of its constitution. I should very much like to have your opinion upon the whole subject. To me, as a stranger, it appears very doubtful whether it is well to have the seat of the presidency government at

the same place as that of the supreme Government. My impression is, that I should like to see the Revenue Board dispensed with, and the commissioners brought into more direct relations with the Government. But whether such revolutionary ideas are capable of being brought into a practical shape, I do not know. I only throw them out in order to get at your opinions; and perhaps a little to relieve my mind after reading the Famine Report."

The tone of his despatches was criticised, and Sir Stafford defended himself in his speech in the House of Commons of August 2, 1867. "Sir Cecil Beadon," he said, "had left his post when the despatch was written." "There was nothing to be done in the interest of the province by visiting his conduct with any severe censure, or anything in the nature of a punishment." There were serious reasons for blaming others, and also for finding fault with the system which Sir Cecil had to administer. On the whole, "We had not done with the subject. This catastrophe must always remain a monument of our failure, a humiliation to the people of this country, to the Government of this country, and to those of our Indian officials, of whom we had been, perhaps, a little too proud." Lord Cranborne remarked, in the same debate, that "it was open to other nations to doubt whether it was possible under any circumstances that the English nation could learn the art of government." It is certainly open.

In the administration of India few things were more important to Sir Stafford's mind than the improvement of

the position of the people. As will be seen later, he was anxious for the strictest fairness in dealing with them, and in the interpretation of treaties with the different native States. Among other matters, he was anxious that the people of the country should have their share in the government of the country. He was particularly concerned that they should, as far as possible, be admitted into the Civil Service. On this point (June 24, 1867) he asks the opinion of Sir John Lawrence. "I am myself of opinion," he says, "that some plan should be adopted for rendering it easier than it is at present for natives to gain appointments in the Covenanted services. Whether any use could be made of the Gilchrist foundation to enable young men to come over here and compete, or whether a certain number of appointments should be given by competitive examination in India itself, the successful candidates being selected at a somewhat earlier age than is the case with those whom we select here, and being sent over at the expense of the Government to complete their education, is, I think, a point well worthy of your consideration." "It seems a mockery," he writes to Lord Napier, "to tell them to come and compete in Westminster if they like." Sir John Lawrence (August 17) replies that Englishmen must hold responsible and political offices. Bengalees can pass examinations, but have not the qualities necessary in practice. But he is in favour of doing all that can safely be done for the advancement of the natives. An important statement of Sir Stafford's ideas is to be found in a letter of his

to the Earl of Kellie (September 9, 1867), which we quote:—

"The question which has occured to me is, Whether competitive examinations form the best means of selecting natives for our service. I have no doubt that, with all the imperfections and drawbacks of the system, it is the one best suited to us in England; but I do not feel so clear as to its being equally good for the natives of India. The young Englishman who offers himself for competition for the Indian service shows that he has some stuff in him; that he is willing not only to prepare himself for a very severe examination, but to expatriate himself for the best years of his life, and to embark in a career from which he cannot easily turn into any other. By selecting those who pass the best examination, we do not make quite sure of getting the best men; but we have at least as good a chance of getting them in that way as in any other, and we avoid the difficulties which attend the patronage system. But in India I imagine that a well-contrived system of patronage might have its advantages. It would enable our governors to select young men of family and influence, and to enlist them in our service. Competitive examinations might fill our ranks with a very questionable set of young civilians, and when once you had thrown open this door, you could hardly close it. I fancy that if we were to adopt some such rule as that which you suggest—viz., that no one shall rise to a higher grade than that of assistant, unless he has passed a certain number of years in England, and there passed

certain prescribed examinations—we might allow the governors to select the young natives for the inferior grades, and might fix the number of appointments to be annually so filled. Of course no one should be appointed who had not passed a test examination in India; but I doubt whether a competitive examination,—and especially a competition with the English candidates in London,—would afford so good a means of getting the right class of men as it does in England.

"The institution of scholarships or exhibitions in England, which would enable youths to come over and prepare for the London competitions, would probably be a good complement to this system."

Much the same opinions were expressed in Sir Stafford's speech (April 23, 1868) on the Government of India Act Amendment Bill. He remarked that it "was not pleasant for him" to say that, in the Uncovenanted Service the proportion of Englishmen to native officials was six to one. "The impression of myself and the Council is, that the Uncovenanted Service should be, as far as possible, a native service, though doubtless certain appointments should be given to Englishmen." He thought it desirable that we should provide "some mode by which natives should be admitted into the Covenanted Service," and he proposed to introduce a clause for that purpose. The clause was to assert that "nothing in the Act should prevent the authorities from appointing any native of India to any post in the Covenanted Service, subject to

such regulations as may seem expedient to the Governor-General, and as shall be approved by the Secretary for India and the majority of his Council." The Government did not remain in office long enough to carry this bill.

Turning to affairs of external policy, we find Sir Stafford first engaged in the question of the Mysore succession. The native ruler of Mysore was childless: he had adopted a son, a very young boy, and the problem was whether we should acknowledge the son as successor or should annex Mysore. Lord Cranborne had proposed, in Sir Stafford's words, "to let everything depend upon the character of the adopted child." But it was probable that there would be a considerable lapse of time between the death of the Rajah and the majority of the boy.

"My principal objection is," he writes, "that there will probably be a period of ten or twelve years between the death of the Rajah and the majority of his son, during which there will be ample room for all the machinations and intrigues on the part of the Nizam, and of the agents for the native princes, which you so justly dread. The inclination of my mind, therefore, is to take advantage of the present position of the Rajah, and to make a new arrangement during his life, to which he no doubt would gladly give his assent, whereby we may regulate the affairs of Mysore for the future. If it were not for the inconvenience of upsetting or appearing to upset so many previous decisions, I should be for replacing the Rajah upon the throne, subject to such conditions as would probably keep him straight for the present, and would certainly

give us an effectual right of free entry if he went wrong. Speaking as a Government, I think we ought to find no insuperable difficulty in devising such conditions; and if we are to make Mysore a model native State, it ought to be by the adoption of a constitution which will work with any kind of rajah, and not by relying on the happy accident of getting hold of a decent man. I think your policy of educating the boy involves a good deal of uncertainty in the experiment itself, besides keeping open a question which it is desirable to close, and which I think we could close more advantageously now than hereafter. I own that I do not quite like to commit myself to the special pleading of the Partition Treaty, though your argument is very ingenious and colourable. If it were the only way out of the difficulty I would adopt it, but it seems to me that there is a better way out of it, and that it lies in upholding or recognising the permanent character of the treaty, regarding the Rajah as under temporary forfeiture for a breach of the subsidiary treaty, and making terms with him which may set the question at rest for the future. Of course, in saying this I assume that we are clear against annexation, and if we decide against annexation, I think we must recognise the adoption. If we are not to take this line, I am inclined to prefer Sir C. Wood's high-handed policy to the continuance of the present suspense. I have not yet talked this over with any one, and am anxious to have your general opinion before I do so, as I should be very sorry that there should be any unnecessary divergence between us."

Sir John Lawrence, contrary to his usual policy, was in this case disposed to advocate the annexation of Mysore. The Government, and Sir Stafford, decided against this course, and Sir John Lawrence writes, "Now that we have decided on maintaining the present dynasty, it only remains for us to carry out that policy in a true and honest spirit."

Sir Stafford's notions about the treaty and the equity of the business are set forth thus in a letter to Lord Halifax:—

"I shall be most happy to confer with you on the terms in which it should be couched. My views are shortly these:—

"1. I hold that the Partition Treaty was intended to establish a separate Hindoo State, which was to be in close relations with the British Government, and that *that* treaty was in no sense a temporary one. Certainly it did not give *us* any reversionary right to Mysore. Therefore I hold that so much of Lord Cranborne's argument as turned upon the absence of words of inheritance from the Partition Treaty was unsound, as well as (to my thinking) a little unworthy of a great Power. But though the treaty was of a permanent character, I do not think that it amounted to a treaty of guarantee.

"2. I hold that the subsidiary treaty was a personal one; that it will expire with the life of the present Maharajah; and that it will be incumbent on us then to come to some new arrangement with whoever may be his successor.

"3. I think that, as he has adopted a son, it is expedient

for us to consent to that son's succession to the Raj on proper terms, though without admitting that he has claim as of right. It is much easier for us to put him on the throne and make our own terms with him, than to set him aside and claim a right to annex.

"4. I think that in making terms with him we ought to reserve far more distinctly than the subsidiary treaty reserved, a right of intervention, and in the last resort of absolute assumption (query, resumption?) of his dominion in the event of misgovernment."

It would extend this chapter too far, if we were to add the instructions for educating the adopted boy, and for administering the State of Mysore during his minority. Enough has been said to show the fair and honourable character of Sir Stafford's mind where treaties with native States were concerned.

Our Afghan relations have ever been one of the *cruces* of the Government of India. Where they were concerned, Sir Stafford was thoroughly in accord with the policy of Sir John Lawrence,—the policy of leaving the Afghans to settle their own embroiled affairs, and of recognising the ruler who emerged successful from the struggle for existence. That struggle, at the moment, was unusually violent, and proposals and requests were, of course, received from the various chiefs who had the singular ambition to rule in Cabul. Sir Stafford's views are briefly given in his letter to Sir John Lawrence, already quoted by Mr Bosworth Smith: "We are very reluctant to intermeddle in any way with these complicated civil wars, and I hope

you will adhere to your policy of entire neutrality." Again:—

"I am anxious about the north-west frontier, but am still doubtful of the policy of mixing ourselves up in Afghan quarrels. We should run great risk if we espoused any cause of making a doubtful friend and a host of bitter enemies; but most assuredly the latter would think it their interest to invoke the aid of Russia, and so bring upon us the very evil we are apprehensive of and wish to guard against. I think we should treat Russia with confidence, and should consider well whether we cannot come to some understanding with her for the promotion of our common interest in the extension of commerce in Central Asia, and for the neutralisation of Afghanistan."

The Russians, unluckily, are "kittle cattle" to have "understandings" with, nor is *Anglica fides* proverbially excellent in Russia. But, whether we be Russophobes or not, the policy of making the Afghans the natural allies of Russia, and our deadly enemies, hardly seemed a probable act of folly. *Dis aliter visum?*

Probably the Abyssinian expedition brought more toil and trouble to Sir Stafford Northcote than any other event during his tenure of office. It is not possible nor desirable to give, in this place, a history of that successful expenditure of money on missionaries. No doubt this is not precisely a fair account of the objects of the expedition. But if the British taxpayer will calmly consider what missionaries have cost him, in money, in blood, in international jealousies, during the last fifty years, he will

perhaps think that those excellent men should take their own lives in their own hands, like the good Jesuits, like the Père Brébœuf in Canada, of old; like martyred men of our own faith, and our own blood, and our own day.

The part of the Indian Secretary during the expedition was more or less to trust Sir Robert Napier, to aid him, and to soothe the inevitable jealousies, military and civilian. How far he succeeded may be gathered from a letter of that general's :—

20th May [1868].

I have to acknowledge officially how much I consider is due to the prompt manner in which everything that could be suggested was offered me, and my requisitions most promptly met. Your frank confidence has made it a personal pleasure to me to think I have in any way met your wishes.—Believe me, yours very truly, R. Napier.

It is not necessary to write the whole history of the Abyssinian expedition from the point of view of the Indian Secretary of State. Sir Stafford Northcote was, from the beginning, of the opinion that the expedition was necessary: he held to this when some of his colleagues wavered, and he believed in the expediency of thorough and even costly equipment and organisation. On May 10, he writes to the Viceroy that "The inclination of the Council here is to abstain from action of a military character, and I think it probable that this will be the ultimate decision of the Government; but I cannot help feeling that it is very little to our credit that we should leave these men in the hands of such a

sovereign as King Theodore without making an effort to release them." Later, he had a moment of hoping that Theodore's power had waned, and that no expedition might be needed. When the expedition was decided on, he writes that "we are anxious not to hamper Napier with too many restrictions, or even suggestions." To Sir Robert Napier he says that "the scale upon which you propose to act is certainly a very large one, and the expense will be serious. At the same time, I think you are right in resolving to be on the safe side." We have since preferred, too calamitously often, to be on the cheap side. He was "unhappy" at the idea of taking a distinction between two "classes" of Theodore's captives, and rescuing one set, while leaving the others to their chance, though "I go all lengths with you" (he says to the present Lord Derby) "in anathematising the folly of the missionaries, who seem to me to have worked hard for their own misfortunes."

An unpleasant part of Sir Stafford's duties was to argue against Sir John Lawrence's complaint that India had to pay for her troops while they were doing English work in Abyssinia. Sir John's arguments will be found in his biography, by Mr Bosworth Smith. To myself Sir John seems to have had the better case. Sir Stafford's opinion was thus expressed in a letter to the Viceroy:—

"The Abyssinian question has been a very thorny one, and there have been many doubtful points to settle. I am sorry, though not surprised, at what you say about the pay of troops. It would have been much pleasanter

to have taken them off the finances of India, and I have no doubt we could have carried the popular sentiment with us; but I think it would have been, in the first place, unjust, and, in the second place, to the detriment of India in the long-run. Mr Laing said to me after the division, 'I think I have made a very good bargain for India; I hope you will always be able to do as well.' I see the newspapers are greatly misrepresenting my argument as to the nature of India's interest in the affair. What I hold is, that India, surrounded as she is by semi-civilised neighbours, with whom she is obliged to enter into occasional diplomatic relations, is far more interested in maintaining the principle of the inviolability of envoys than England is. I believe that, if we had nothing but English and European opinion to look to, we might perfectly argue, 'These missionaries are troublesome busybodies; —— a headstrong fool; Rassam is certainly to be pitied, but his going there is all the fault of Lord Russell and Layard; we have no business in Abyssinia; Theodore has been horribly mismanaged, and has some ground for complaining of us; the country is difficult, the prospect of success uncertain, the risk of failure and the certainty of great loss considerable: we won't expose our troops, but will go on negotiating and trusting to the chapter of accidents.' We should, I hope, feel rather humiliated if we took such a line; but I believe the country would content itself with grumbling a little, while I do not suppose that France or Germany would think us one whit the less powerful, though they might

sneer at our want of spirit. But do you seriously believe that such tameness would fail to produce its effect in India, or in the countries adjoining India? Do you suppose, for instance, that the admission that Indian troops could not penetrate so difficult a country as Abyssinia would be a wise one to make? or that Indian envoys to Muscat or Zanzibar would have found it to their advantage to have it commonly reported that England did not trouble herself to rescue her servants?

"In any case, I think it certain that, if India were to insist on a strict reckoning in such a matter as this, and were to demand to be paid for her troops when lent for imperial service, the account would be found to be open to rectification on both sides; and the settlement would, I suspect, be very much in favour of England. We should be charged with the cost of a portion of the navy for one thing; and we should have some difficulty in maintaining our right to send home troops whenever we chose to dispense with them, thereby at once throwing more men on the imperial finances and cutting off the capitation payments."

On April 30, 1868, he wrote to the Viceroy that he had heard the good news from Abyssinia, — a consolation among the defeats and disasters of the Government in home policy. His letter to Sir Robert Napier may be quoted, were it but for the characteristic optimism of him who "saw a bit of blue," when others beheld only clouds, and who was naturally elated by the fortunate close of a laborious and uncertain adventure.

"*May* 1, 1868.

"MY DEAR SIR ROBERT NAPIER,—I need not say with what feelings I received your telegrams announcing the events of the 10th and 13th. We have indeed every reason to be thankful to God for the success with which He has blessed the expedition, and every reason to be proud of our commander and his gallant army. I was staying at Osborne when the news came, and sent the telegrams to the Queen immediately. Her Majesty was greatly pleased, and desired me to send her special congratulations. We are of course most anxious to hear more particulars. When we receive the despatches, we shall lose no time in moving the thanks of Parliament, and in proposing some more substantial mark of the national gratitude. . . . What you have done has been altogether unique, and you have exhibited the British army in an entirely new light to the world. Everybody was ready to acknowledge its martial spirit, and there would have been nothing surprising in its defeating ten or twenty times its number of opponents, or in its capturing the most formidable positions. But you have undertaken and have triumphantly accomplished exactly the sort of task for which nobody believed us to be competent."

The news of our success was telegraphed to the India Office at one o'clock on a Sunday morning. Sir Stafford was at Osborne. At about eleven o'clock on Sunday his eldest son carried the intelligence to Mr Disraeli. After

some delay he was admitted, and found Mr Disraeli gorgeously arrayed in a dressing-gown and in imposing head-gear. Mr Disraeli was opulent in compliment, but wholly declined to give the news to the Sunday papers. It was kept for Monday's journals. As to the victory, Sir Stafford writes to Sir S. Fitzgerald, "every one is delighted—that is, except the Liberals; even the French papers write enthusiastically on the expedition." How times alter, and how little enthusiasm do we excite or expect to-day! Mr Gladstone, however, when the troops were thanked (July 2, 1868), did his old friend full justice:—

The right honble. gentleman [Mr Disraeli] has abstained from claiming any peculiar praise for the Government at home, but I am bound to say that we are indebted to them for the wise choice of the commander. We are indebted to them, and to those with whom they may have taken counsel, for the unbounded confidence they reposed in the abilities of the object of their choice, for the unsparing liberality with which, on deciding the difficult question of facing these great risks, they made the whole forces of the country available for the purposes that were in view; for the care and forethought with which, so far at least as I am able to judge, all the necessary provisions were made. Here it would not be more than justice, I think, to distinguish among the members of the Government that Minister who necessarily must have been charged with the chief share of the responsibility and labours of the expedition—I mean the Secretary of State for India; and lastly, we are indebted to the Government for the firmness and decision with which from first to last they persisted—acting therein, I must say, in accordance with public opinion and the enlightened mind of the nation—in confining the operations of this expedition to

its legitimate purpose, and in refusing to be led beyond the line of duty and wisdom by any visions, however flattering and seductive.

For himself, the whole affair had been one of eternal hard work, anxiety, and responsibility for the conduct of affairs which he could but in a distant manner direct. "From the moment I undertook this task," he said in the House (November 28, 1867), "I have never known what it is to be free from anxiety." There were many reasons why what was to be done had to be done quickly. Sir John Lawrence could part with the Indian force for the time; but who could say when it might be needed in India? It was "a delicate matter to send the natives of India on a foreign expedition, unless you take care to make preparations suitable to their peculiar customs," and all such preparations, and the necessary speed, involved what might seem extravagant expense. It might even be contended that the provisions of the Government of India Act (1858) had been violated in the rapid measures necessary for raising money, and this conduct Sir Stafford had to defend, in his speech of November 28, 1867. With his delicate sense of legality, perhaps this was not the least anxious part of his task. He could quote precedents, under Mr Gladstone, doing so "in good humour." "He did infinitely more in 1859 in the third China war, when he broke the law more deliberately and distinctly than any one can pretend that we have done." [1] Again, necessity had been so pressing, that the expedition was

[1] Letter to Lord Beaconsfield, November 28, 1867.

arranged through the nearest and most accessible subordinate government of India, that of Bombay, not with the central Government. The whole perplexity, responsibility, and excitement of so novel, strange, and complicated an affair was borne with Sir Stafford's usual cheery tranquillity, and all ended in success, congratulations, and fireworks. It was characteristic of him that, on the Monday when the House of Commons was excited by the news, he avoided the cheers that were ready to greet him, by furtively entering the House from behind the Speaker's chair.

These ecstasies and enthusiasms could not save the Government. Mr Gladstone, who had warmly congratulated Sir Stafford in the House of Commons, turned them out, on the Irish Church; and so ended Sir Stafford's troubled, but useful and successful, months of work at the India Office.

One little circumstance of a private character may be mentioned. In his own correspondence I do not find, but in the letters of the Indian Provincial Governments I do find, mention of a sum of £1000 which he gave, from his own purse, to hospitals and other useful institutions in India. When we remember his tender conscience, and the affair of the Sultan's ball, it may, perhaps, be inferred that he thought he owed something to the country which paid for that entertainment. At all events, his liberality, that of a man never rich, was unexampled in Indian Secretaries, as I learn from one of the governors who had to distribute the money. As to the Sultan's

ball, the present Lord Iddesleigh furnishes the following account:—

My father has often been attacked on account of the ball given at the India Office by the Secretary of State and his Council to the Sultan on his visit to England in 1867. The expenses of the ball were borne by India, and it has been said that Indian money was thus used to pay for what was in reality an English entertainment. As my father himself has pleaded guilty to "a little sin" in the matter, I am debarred from maintaining his absolute innocence; but I may, perhaps, explain how the "little sin" came to be committed.

I well remember walking home from church with him one Sunday with several other members of the family, when he confided to us that a most brilliant idea had occurred to him during the sermon, which was that the Sultan, as a great Mohammedan sovereign, ought certainly to receive during his English visit some distinguished attention from the Indian authorities. The occasion, he thought, must not be lost, as it was not likely that the Sultan would revisit this country, while it was certain that he would never set foot in India itself. The idea thus started was instantly and warmly taken up by the Indian Council, and invitations were issued for the ball, which was regarded by my father as altogether an Indian ceremony.

The Indian Secretaryship left behind it many responsibilities, and not a little trouble and anxiety. The expenditure on the Abyssinian campaign was challenged later in Parliament, for it had very greatly exceeded the estimates, "rough but not careless," originally produced. The Government were accused at once of having given Sir Robert Napier *carte blanche*, and of *not* having given him *carte blanche*, by interfering with his plans and

thwarting his wishes. When Mr Candlish later moved for an Abyssinian Committee to inquire into the administration and expenses of the war, Sir Stafford seconded the motion, being fully convinced that he at least was free from any shadow of blame. This is anticipating the chronological series of events; but the matter belongs so entirely to the years of Indian Office, that it is best dealt with as part of that period. The draft report of the Select Committee lies before me, with manuscript notes in the hand of Sir Stafford. The chairman's report, as proposed to the Committee, contained twenty-three folio pages of severity. He maintained that the Government, by "giving *carte blanche* to the government of Bombay and the Commander-in-chief, had rendered any reliable estimate by the home Government impossible." Sir Stafford in his notes remarks that this charge is quite inconsistent with many subsequent accusations. "No general *carte blanche* was given," he writes, "though the government of Bombay were told in the first place that their requisitions should be complied with. They were ordered also to send home estimates and monthly accounts." Though backed by a "strict party majority," the chairman was obliged to drop twenty out of his twenty-three pages of arraignment. "The chairman's allegations were negatived without a division by a Committee in which he had a majority."

Of more interest to many people than the details of money paid for mules and hay in Abyssinia are some of Sir Stafford Northcote's many private letters written

during his period of office. From Osborne, Balmoral, and Windsor he wrote frequently to Lady Northcote. "The little Prince of Prussia is a great amusement to them all," he writes from Osborne in 1867, "and the Queen is full of his good sayings." At Balmoral he found "the air very enjoyable," and the whole party "very cordial." He discovered that it was "not very easy to hit a stag running at full speed at 150 yards—especially the first time of using a rifle," and may have remembered Henry Ashton, in the 'Bride of Lammermoor,' and the "first time he shot in a cross-bow." The rifle had been the Prince Consort's, and was marked with a stud, not with a notch in Leatherstocking's fashion, for every stag it had slain. A statesman now mature in years, Sir Stafford enjoyed lying for hours on a damp hillside, but not without apprehensions. Consequently he did not try the same sport in a snowstorm, and was reckoned "very much of a coddle" by enterprising youths—an opinion not shared by his sovereign. Indeed, enterprising youth was so benumbed that day as to be incapable of pulling a trigger. October 3 is late for stalking at best, as the stags begin to roar and rush at their assailant—so does Venus move their minds, as Virgil would have said. That he was not unpopular was demonstrated by his need of sixteen of his own photographs to distribute at Balmoral. "I always enjoy the place, and feel brilliantly well here," he writes in October of the following year. With the royal grandchildren he enjoyed what he always liked—a

"regular child's party." He owned that he left "with a heavy heart, for this is a place I get very fond of." His last letter—"one more letter from a royal residence to make the last, as the children say"—was from Windsor Castle (November 29, 1868), announcing the decision of the Government to resign at once, as they were well beaten in the elections. The course was "more dignified than waiting to be voted out." He hoped that Mr Bright might succeed him in the India Office, but the Duke of Argyll was appointed to that post.

In the course of the year 1867 a vacancy had occurred in the representation of North Devon, and on the invitation of that constituency, Sir Stafford, vacating his seat at Stamford, came forward as a candidate, and was returned without opposition.

It was a great and sincere pleasure to him to find himself at length representing his own county. His parliamentary connection with it, thus begun, lasted as long as he remained in the House of Commons, and it is probable that never were the relations between a member of Parliament and his constituents more honourable or more affectionate than those which existed between himself and the electors of North Devon.

When Sir Stafford was elected in 1867, his colleague was Mr Acland (the present Sir Thomas Acland), a Liberal, but an old and valued friend.

In 1868, at the general election, an effort was made to win the second seat for the Conservative party, and Sir Stafford and Mr Walrond (the late Sir John Walrond),

another and a most intimate friend, stood together, and fought a hard battle. But victory was out of their reach. Sir Stafford was indeed at the head of the poll, but Mr Acland was not far behind him, and Mr Walrond was unsuccessful.

This was the last election contest in which Sir Stafford ever engaged, Sir Thomas Acland and he being returned unopposed at the general elections of 1874 and 1880.

In addressing his constituents that autumn, he was a good deal badgered, as was natural, about the sudden Tory conversion to Reform. He "neither repented of having opposed the bill of 1866, nor of having supported that of 1867." He "did not at all like tame meetings, though he did not like riotous ones," and there was enough of horseplay at Bideford. He maintained that the Liberals had treated Reform as a very nice cake, that was always to be on the table, and never to be cut; "and they were very jealous when they saw any disposition on the part of their opponents to try to cut it." Perhaps one may remain of opinion that it would have been wiser in the Tories to let the Liberals cut their own cake. He thought Mr Gladstone was hasty and inconsiderate in dealing with the Irish Church. But, on this topic, there was a little wrangle between himself and Mr Gladstone. Mr Gladstone was reported to have said at Wigan that Sir Stafford would not pledge himself to resist the disestablishment of the Irish Church. There was, as often happens, a blunder in the report; Sir Stafford had declined to give any pledge that would be

binding for ever, "in all circumstances," a kind of pledge which he never would give. As for the property of the Church of England in Ireland, he held that "there was no more doubt about it than about the property of the Duke of Devonshire in Ireland." This, of course, was said some years before there was "doubt" about all property, everywhere—the present happy condition of our affairs. In his electoral address, he denounced disestablishment as "tending to shake confidence in the security of corporate or other property," and indeed it was the first push of the blind Samson of anarchy. He had to congratulate himself and his constituents on the comparative quiescence of the Fenian conspiracy, if that word may now be used without offence. But in all our troubles with Ireland, "I am tempted to say, after all, it serves us right." No Morrison's pill of administration, he said, would heal that long disease of Ireland, "that long disease, her life," one is tempted to quote. "These evils must be cured by treating Ireland as if she were an integral part of our empire, and not by a course of legislation that must end, as is desired, I believe, by many of the more violent of the Irish party, in the legislative separation, perhaps in the complete separation of the two countries." ("No, no," and uproar.) Then followed "cheers and confusion," a brief phrase expressive of modern political conditions. Into the Parliament which was to level the Irish Church with the other denominations, he entered, and a new chapter in his life began.

CHAPTER X.

THE HUDSON BAY COMPANY.

CHAIRMAN OF HUDSON BAY COMPANY—ITS PICTURESQUE HISTORY—AN ANACHRONISM—RELATIONS WITH CANADA—THE STATES—HALF-BREEDS—LOUIS RIEL—LORD GRANVILLE A "WONNER"—START FOR CANADA—NOTES FROM OTTAWA—MONTREAL—NEW YORK HOTEL LIFE—NIAGARA—FENIAN INVASION—LETTER TO MR DISRAELI—RETURN TO ENGLAND.

FROM the very beginning of 1869, Sir Stafford Northcote's time was occupied much more with the affairs of the Hudson Bay Company than with the disestablishment of the Irish Church, which was engaging the attention of Parliament. In the plan of that celebrated measure, he admired (he says in a private letter) the ingenious "combination of bribery and robbery." He perceived that people would be not unwilling to "exercise charity to the poor and interesting classes, without cost to themselves, by giving up our parsons and their sermons." There are certainly sacrifices which it would be less irksome to make. "People are now openly saying that the scheme will be just as applicable to England as to Ireland, and I

am beginning really and seriously to think it probable that the attempt will be made to apply it to us within a few years, unless a reaction soon takes place in public opinion." However, his practical business was less, as has been said, with the Irish Church than with another picturesque corporation whose property was going where all property goes at last—to the stronger.

The victim in this case was the Hudson Bay Company, of which he became chairman in January 1869. Sir Stafford's reputation as a financier gained for him many offers from City people of positions of dignity and trust. The emoluments were often tempting, but with a single exception he refused all. Unless some use of his special qualifications was to be made, he considered, and wisely, that chairmanships and trusteeships had better be held by those who made finance and financiers their special study. In common with all honourable men, he would never of course give his name when he could not hope to give thought and time to the subject involved. The one office he did accept was the governorship of the Hudson Bay Company in 1868, the directors having reason to think that a statesman of his standing would be of particular value to the Company in the delicate and difficult negotiation of transferring their huge estate of Rupert's Land to Canada. The Company was assuredly in a parlous state. It was an anachronism, and a wealthy anachronism. The Company was dear to the fancy of boyhood, when we read Washington Irving's 'Astoria,' and dreamed of Indians, bears, beavers, and *voyageurs*. It was the queen of unmeasured

tracts of wild land in the American North-West. It had been in its time a kind of sovereign, and had waged private wars; it had a charter from Charles II., and held (of the manor of East Greenwich) the gigantic slice of the globe which is now Manitoba. But civilisation, population, immigrants, politicians, were now pressing harder on the Company than ever it had pressed on the Red man. The North American colonies of Great Britain had been formed into a Confederation in 1867, and the Confederation was big enough to swallow the old "Rupert's Land," the old wildernesses of the Hudson Bay Company. Indeed it was only too true that the Company must "come and be killed" by the Canadians, like the legendary ducks. Lord Granville wrote a letter from the Colonial Office to Sir Stafford Northcote, as Governor of the Company (March 1869), and in that letter he explained the case with ruthless clearness. The Company was an anachronism; it must accept the best terms which Canada would condescend to give. Civilisation, or what is commonly called civilisation, was encroaching on the territory from the United States. Enterprising rowdyism was here, discontented and bewildered Blackfeet and Sioux Indians were there. It had been found that the vast "fertile belt," as large as England, was as good land as any in Yorkshire. The Hudson Bay Company, a decrepit association of trappers, armed with "a mere parchment" (as the Canadians said), and that an old parchment, the gift of the "Merry Monarch," and of doubtful application, could not be allowed to leave valuable domains in possible anarchy.

At any moment border troubles with ruffians or with Red men might bring us into collision with the United States. Canadian enterprise and capital were checked, and immigration to Canada was discouraged. Men were anxious to take the places of black bears, elks, beavers, minks, martens, silver foxes, and other valuable animals. Thus, as Lord Granville pointed out, that the Company should lose its land was expedient for the United States and for Canada.

"*To the Hudson Bay Company the concession may almost be said to be necessary.*"

This was the death-sentence of the Company, as far as their old wild principality was concerned. The only question was, How much could the Company save out of the wreck? It is needless to give a lengthy report of the long negotiations. The Canadian tone was cavalier, and their representatives were particularly vexed by Sir Stafford's alleging that the Company made concessions "cheerfully." It was like him to say so, but some Canadians could not forgive him for being cheerful. His private letters to Lady Northcote contain a number of references to this business. He recognised that the Company, when reorganised five years earlier, had paid the old shareholders too much for lands that would now have to be sold at a loss. The Company had another loss in a mild winter, which depressed the demand for the spoils of minks, martens, and silver foxes. Disturbances from the French half-breeds were feared on the Red River, "for those Canadians are an unscrupulous set, and are intriguing

there in a way that will make the settlement too hot to hold us, unless the Government will put them down with a firm hand." Monsieur Louis Riel was moving: the Red River French half-breeds were complaining that the Company meant to "sell" them. Their priests were active. Fort Garry was the centre of the disturbances —distant, inaccessible Fort Garry. Meanwhile Lord Granville, in the letter already referred to, had suggested terms of surrender, to which Sir Stafford and Sir Curtis Lampson finally induced the Hudson Bay shareholders to agree. The Company gave up Rupert's Land (the old name) "to her Majesty," and the Canadians were to pay £300,000 to the Company when Rupert's Land was transferred to the Dominion. Six years earlier the land had been valued at a million. There were many other articles in this agreement, as to reserves of land, stations, about special taxation, and so forth. The shareholders met on March 24, 1869. Sir Stafford was in the chair, and persuaded the Company to execute itself not uncheerfully; for, if they did not, they would come under Canadian taxation, and would not get the £300,000. "I do not think you would expect me to tell you all the disagreeable things the Canadians might do," he said; "because we do not want to put them into their heads, but there is no doubt that they might do a great many very inconvenient things." On the other hand, his cheery view of the future, supposing the terms were accepted, must have failed to soothe the already irritated Canadians. The meeting was adjourned, but the Governor got his

way. This affair was the cause of his trip to North America in the following year, first mooted early in 1870, when he wrote (January 22): "What should you say to my going as Joint Commissioner with Bishop Tache to the Red River?" These, though late in life, were his *Wanderjahre*. His reasons for going were to see the Canadian Government, and to take care of the Company's interests during the transfer. Sir Curtis Lampson suggested that Lady Northcote should accompany her husband. There was a great deal of worry and indecision. "My friend Lord Granville is too sharp to please either Lampson or myself, and is what the Marchioness would call such a 'wonner,' that I fancy we shall feel uneasy if we have to separate and deal with him from different sides of the Atlantic."[1] "I am really quite ill with the worry," he adds; "Dizzy is immensely sympathetic and very flattering." The indecision was caused by the behaviour of the Canadians, who could not make up their minds about receiving a visitor so unscrupulously "cheerful." Canada was in a difficulty with the Riel insurgents on the Red River, and their demands ("if she refuses she will have to fight them, and it will be an awkward business for her"); and, on the other side, if she gratified the Rielites at the expense of the Company, *they* would "kick up such a dust as will bother the Government, and perhaps Canada too." It was a quadrangular duel between the Company, Canada, the Home

[1] The Marchioness is the Marchioness Swiveller, and the "wonner" was Miss Sally Brass.

Government, and Riel's half-breeds, who had destroyed £50,000 of the Company's property. Who was to pay for this loss?

These anxieties were caused by the kind of interregnum between the Government of the Company and that of Canada. The Red River people, especially the French half-breeds, conceived that their interests and rights were menaced. The protection of law and order (not then understood by politicians to be "played out") was not in the hands of the Company after December 1, and yet Canada was hardly in a position to act with vigour. Meanwhile the Company was nervous about its £300,000, which ought to have been paid by December 1, but had not been paid. Sir John Young was finally appointed Governor of Rupert's Land by the Company, which, at the same time, was to retain *no* control over his actions. In these confused and distracting circumstances, Lord Granville "could not say how public-spirited" he thought Sir Stafford's conduct in deciding to go out to scatter oil on the tempestuous waters of the Red River.

This disturbed stream had recently reflected a flag bearing the *fleur-de-lis* and shamrock, instead of the Union-jack. What either the shamrock or the *fleur-de-lis* had to do *dans cette galère*, the heraldic learning of M. Louis Riel, and Mr O'Donohue his ally, could no doubt explain. But the whole confusion — what with half-breed French, loyal French, English half-breeds, Scotch settlers, provisional governments, Sioux on the war-path, assemblies, delegates, American sympathisers,

and Irishmen at large—would have been comic, had it not been highly inconvenient and menacing.

It was on April 6 that Sir Stafford, with Lady Northcote and his sons Henry and Amyas, started for Liverpool and for the troubles of the West. The voyage was uneventful, and in Montreal the shooting of Scott by Riel was found to be the chief interest. England had lost a chance by dallying over the trouble, it was said; energy would have been a great encouragement to loyal Canadians. They fancied that England would gladly be rid of them; and what with fishery quarrels and their own divisions, they are certainly rather a luxurious ornament of the empire. Filibusters were said to be ready to go against Riel if troops were not sent—so Sir Stafford writes in the diary of his Canadian residence. The United States officers sent warnings of Fenian attempts on bridges. Altogether the prospects were warlike. Mr Donald Smith also reported that the Company would lose £100,000, and would find it hard to get compensation. Moreover, the fur-trade was ceasing to be remunerative: the Company must look for other dealings than in minks and silver foxes. Perhaps the worst news was that some of the Company's officers were thought to have abetted Riel. They, too, had their objections to the transfer of land and the Canadian domination.

On reaching Ottawa, Sir Stafford found the site of the town in possession of but one advantage. It was so exquisitely and universally inconvenient, that "nobody can complain of his neighbours being better off than him-

self." He had not long to suffer in Ottawa. On April 24, a telegram came from the Colonial Office. The troops might advance on conditions. The £300,000 was to be paid down. Canada was to send 500 soldiers to the English 250, and to acquiesce in the decision of the Home Government as to disputes with the settlers. General Lindsay was to approve of the military arrangements. The Bishop of Rupert's Land said that troops ought to have been sent long ago. Meanwhile the Canadian Government was consulting with delegates from the Red River people. Sir Stafford's immediate business was to obtain some compensation for losses to the Company in consequence of the rising under Riel. The sum of £50,000, or even £40,000, seemed a fair equivalent for the losses. The shabby behaviour of the Home Government in the whole affair was the point on which he found it most easy to agree with the Canadian statesmen. The English Government should have settled all questions *before* the transfer to Canada.

Sir G. Cartier's defence of the Canadian conduct may be quoted: "Sir G. Cartier came in while we were talking, and I repeated to him the substance of what had passed. He assured me that the Government, in declining to accept the transfer of the country in December, had not been influenced by pecuniary considerations, but by others of a political character; and that amongst other things they had feared that if Canada accepted the transfer the status of the insurgents might be held to be altered, and that the United States might claim a right

to recognise them as belligerents; whereas, so long as the country remained under the Government of the Hudson Bay Company, to which no objection was taken, the affair could only be regarded as a riot. I said I had no desire to question the conduct of Canada in declining to accept the transfer, or to inquire into the motives of the Government. What the Company was concerned with was the refusal of her Majesty's Government to accept the surrender, and that I held that we had a good claim in respect of that refusal—it being for her Majesty's Government to settle afterwards with the Government of Canada how that claim was to be met. Both the Ministers concurred that we had a good claim, and that Canada was, to some extent at all events, responsible. They said the Home Government had behaved very shabbily in the matter—a sentiment which I was not disposed to dissent from."

In Ottawa he heard a Canadian debate, which he thus reports: "After luncheon I went up to the House of Commons, and was just in time to hear Sir J. Macdonald's speech introducing the North-West bill. He seemed feeble, and looked ill, but spoke with great skill. He makes no pretension to oratory, but is clear and dexterous in statement, and gave very ingenious turns to his difficult points. The new province—Manitoba (*Dieu qui parle*)—is to contain about 11,000 square miles; the population is reckoned at 15,000. Sir John interrupted himself by offering to point out the limits on the map, which he took to the table and explained to a number of members

who crowded round him. He then gave an outline of the proposed constitution, and observing a smile at the Senate, &c., for so small a territory, turned round and asked if hon. members were aware what was the population of Upper Canada when *its* first constitution was granted—under 10,000, and now there are upwards of 1,600,000. He took care not to point out that Upper Canada contained a good deal more than 11,000 square miles. His mode of introducing the vexed question of the land reserved for the half-breeds was ingenious. He treated the land (1,200,000 acres) as being reserved simply for the purpose of extinguishing the Indian claims; and he threw in the suggestion that the grants to the people who might be entitled to them were to be made in much the same way as the old grants to the U.E. Loyalists (United Empire Loyalists, to whom grants were made in Canada after the Independence of the United States) —a reference very acceptable to the Ontario men. The speech was well received; but there is never much cheering or noise in this House so far as I have observed. Mr Mackenzie made a regular Opposition comment on the measure, ridiculing some parts of the scheme, and complaining of the costliness of the machinery. He was answered by Sir G. Cartier, in a speech which was probably intended for English, delivered with considerable energy, and very provocative of laughter, though there was plenty of good sense in it. After a few observations had been made by one of the French members, and one or two questions had been asked and answered, Sir George

got up again, and said that, with the permission of the House, he would repeat his speech in French, which he accordingly proceeded to do. A little buzz of conversation began to make itself heard on the English benches; but Sir George, having rebuked the offenders and restored quiet, went on with his speech entirely to his own satisfaction. Mr Howe, who came and sat by me while this was going on, remarked that all the French members understood English, though some of the English did not understand French. The Manitobans, he said, would prove themselves more instructed than any others, for they would be able to speak English, French, and Indian."

From Ottawa, Sir Stafford went to Montreal early in May, and thence went to Quebec, where he smiled at the Pumpernickel etiquette of the Lieutenant-Governor: "He was very gracious for so great a man. There is something rather ludicrous in the position of these provincial lieutenant-governors. Sir —— —— never goes out to dine or lunch with any of his subjects, but consented on the present exceptional occasion to return my visit at M. Gautier's about 2.30; and if luncheon should happen to be announced while he was there, and he should happen to be asked to come down, he was 'positively and actually' prepared to do it the same honour as Messrs Pyke and Pluck did to Mrs Nickleby's pot of mild half-and-half. Madame Gautier told us that upon the occasion of the first public ball attended by the Lieutenant-Governor, she received a gracious invitation to attend Lady B.

comme dame d'honneur. She replied that she meant to go to the ball, and should be very happy to go with Lady B."

On May 13, Sir Stafford went to New York. He declined to be "dead-headed" or franked on this expedition. The railway directors receive all thanks for this favour; the shareholders, without any glory, bear the expenses. His remarks on the hotel and the people there are curious: "Betook ourselves after dinner to the sitting-rooms, which have a pretty good supply of ottomans and chairs, but are as bare of tables as if the guests had eaten them (like Ascanius in Virgil). The company evidently had no use for such articles. They spent their time in walking about the corridors, or in sitting on the ottomans, talking or gazing, as the case might be. There was not a book, or a piece of work, or a game of any sort, to be seen; neither did we hear a note of music. The general impression produced was, that the party were a number of unburied ghosts, wandering about till their term of probation was over and Charon ready to take them across the Styx; or perhaps a modern would rather compare them to a number of passengers, without luggage, loitering in a waiting-room till the train should arrive. One quite understands, now, how these people take to whittling sticks. A person with the smallest energy must do it in self-defence. C. and I, after musing a bit, decided on a game of bezique, and walked twice through the rooms to find a place to play. At last we discovered a small marble table, to which we drew our chairs, and began to play. The effect was some-

thing like that produced in the streets of London when an ordinary-looking individual suddenly stops, pulls off his coat, discloses a mountebank's costume, and begins to perform. The company began to cluster near the table, or at all events to stand at the door of the room, and to gaze at us with unmixed astonishment. As we got up to go, a gentleman came up to me. 'What game might you be playing, sir?' 'Bezique,' says I. 'Wal, now, was that bezique?' 'Yes.' 'Wal, I've played it with six people; can you play it with two?' 'Yes.' 'Guess you've got two packs.' 'Yes.' (If the packs had not been very dirty ones, we should have proposed to him to play.) C. explained to him that there were sets sold for four or six players, and he said that must be better, because there was more room for cheating. We wished him good-night, and as he fell back to his friends, who were looking on at this interview, we heard him say, 'Wal, I guess I can't make out what game it is.'"

In New York, a prominent Democrat showed him the delicate machinery of balloting. "He defended the ballot for the sake of peace at the polling time, and described the system under which bribery and intimidation were carried on by agents stationed 100 yards from the boxes (they must not come nearer), who give the voters the cards they are to put in, and watch them drop them into the boxes. The voters, however, sometimes defeat them by carrying slips of paper, with gummed backs, in the hollow of their hand, and sticking them over the ticket with which they have been supplied, thus substituting a different list."

He also beheld Mr Gould and Mr Fisk without envy. From New York he went to Niagara, of which his description is graphic and brief: "It was a grander Chaudiere, characterised by the same individuality among the waves which had struck us on the Ottawa; but, instead of recalling the idea of boys rushing merrily though tumultuously out of school, the waters rather suggested that of Milton's fiends flying headlong from heaven to hell, recoiling with horror from what was before them, but driven forward by the greater fear of what was behind. As night drew on, and the noises of the day came to an end, the sound of the Falls became more conspicuous. Perhaps that is a bad word to use, but the sound was one that impressed itself on more than a single sense. It was like the Egyptian darkness, something that could be felt."

On returning to Montreal, the party had news of the Fenian invasion, described in the following extract from the Diary:—

"We reached the Thousand Islands about seven, and thoroughly enjoyed the lovely scenery. It looks as if Jupiter, when he had done making the world, had found that he had a number of little gems still to dispose of, and had thrown them all into the St Lawrence,—or it may be that Paradise, when Adam had been turned out of it, had been broken up and scattered on these waters. We shot the "Long Sault" rapid about 1.30 P.M.; the Cedars, Coteau, Cascade, and finally the Lachine rapids in the course of the afternoon. That there is some danger, is shown by

the hull of a vessel which was lost on the Coteau last year, and might be inferred from the fact that the authorities do not allow the troops to be taken down the rapids, and require the vessels, when conveying them, to pass through the canals. We met Colonel Gray, M.P. for St John, N.B., at Present. He gave a poor account of Sir John A., and said Lady Macdonald was very low about him. Sir J. Young was, he said, very uneasy about the Fenians. He said that one of our steamers had got aground in passing through the canal at the Sault, and that four American tugs, which had come alongside, had refused to assist her. We reached Montreal soon after seven, and found the whole city in an uproar. The Fenians had really crossed the frontier, and there had been actual fighting at Pigeon Hill. The volunteers had gone out full of ardour; one corps, we are told, actually carried ropes with them to hang any Fenians they might catch. All sorts of details were given: most of them subsequently proved incorrect; but there was a real incursion and real bloodshed. Three Fenians certainly have been killed, and one gun taken. General O'Neill seems to have allowed himself to be taken by the United States authorities. The two centres of Fenian strength are at Malone and St Albans. The object of the invaders at Pigeon Hill was to seize St John's, and so command the approach to Montreal. This attempt has been defeated; had it succeeded, the rails would have been taken up on the Grand Trunk Railway, so as to prevent the Fenians from running trains upon it. As it is, the rails are lifted up at certain points and trains examined

before they are allowed to proceed. Besides the force which attacked us at Pigeon Hill, there is another which is moving in the direction of Huntingdon."

On May 28 the party left for England, having obtained a clear idea of American hostility, Fenian intentions, and the general medley of the situation. The Fenian alarms were a constant cause of disturbance between Canada and the States. This ill-feeling was one motive for the later Treaty of Washington. The withdrawal of the British troops he also thought "an unfortunate step." To settle the trouble with Riel needed the Red River Expedition, the *ultima ratio* of war. As to the information collected, it is best stated by Sir Stafford himself in a letter to Mr Disraeli: "People here say England has missed a great opportunity in this Red River business. If, on the first breaking out of the difficulty, and when Canada declined to accept the country till peace had been restored, the Imperial Government had frankly recognised the duty of restoring it, and had sent a Lieutenant-Governor of their own, with a small body of troops to support him, the matter would have been arranged with the greatest possible ease, the effect on Canadian opinion would have more than neutralised that produced by the withdrawal of the troops, and the effect on the United States would have been to show that whatever might be England's view of the best military disposition of her forces, she had no intention of abandoning her North American possessions, or of giving up the scheme of confederation. It was the course I urged on Lord Granville

in December; but I suspect he was overruled by the Cabinet. The announcement that England was going to administer the affairs of the colony for a time, and to give everybody a full hearing as to the terms on which it was to be annexed to the Confederation, would have stopped the whole business, would have saved the necessity of this expedition, prevented the danger of an Indian war, and preserved the fortunes of the Hudson Bay Company. I am far from feeling easy about the expedition, though matters now look so much better than they did that I am more hopeful. Probably no opposition will be attempted, and the force will be made welcome. But should there be opposition, we may find the difficulties will be very great."

Colonel Wolseley's victory over space and difficulties of transport, with the flight of Riel (the lily) and O'Donohue (the shamrock), permitted affairs on the Red River, and business between Canada and the Company, to settle down peacefully.

The mercantile and mere political affairs of a company, however ancient, and however picturesque its history, and Sir Stafford's connection with its administration, are scarcely matters for biography. He made an important speech to the shareholders in June 1871, discussing the whole position and policy of the association. He recommended a complete and thorough reorganisation of the fur-trade, on a system involving large expenditure of money. A number of the shareholders preferred to drop the fur-trade, and trust to the land and the sales

of land. He, on the contrary, showed that the Company had increased its imports of furs, that prices were good, and that the unprofitableness of the trade arose from the greater expense of its management and working. These expenses would be diminished, he conceived, by the new methods of transport, by the new railway system of Canada and the United States, and by the Company's own introduction of steamers. The old famous class of *voyageurs*, familiar to readers of Washington Irving, was dying out. The Company was also able, if it chose, to supply the new immigrants with the goods they wanted, and this business would increase the general prosperity of the settlement. The Company, it will be seen, which had of old opposed colonisation in the interests of fur, was now anxious to aid it.

For all these purposes, "new blood," new officers, were needed in the Company's service. Now the actual officers were, in a way, sharers in the profits and members of the Company, not mere *employés*, and their consent to the changes was necessary. The officers, like Mr Donald Smith, a member for Manitoba in the Canadian Parliament, were men of weight and importance. They were especially necessary in dealings with the Indians. It was therefore most undesirable to dismiss them, with the fur-trade by way of compensation. They claimed, and had "a moral right" to a share of the famous £300,000, which they did not get. Other claims they had, very strong morally, but not valid in law. To dissatisfy them would not only be unfair and unkind, but, owing to their position in the

country, most inexpedient. He calculated, therefore, the value of the "retiring interests" of the officers, and this sum he advised the Company to pay—namely, £100,000.

There was a good deal of dissent among the shareholders, one of whom classically remarked that Sir Stafford's "candid and winning manners" had "made the worse appear the better reason." His ideas ultimately prevailed.

CHAPTER XI.

DIARY OF VISIT TO THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL, AND GREECE.

YACHTING LIFE NOT THOUGHTFUL — GIBRALTAR—THE SPANISH PRIDE — CORK-WOODS — A PICNIC—MALTA — PORT SAID—NUBAR PASHA—THE FRENCH EMPRESS—ILLUMINATIONS—THE CANAL AND THE DESERT—ISMAILIA—ALADDIN'S PALACES—ORIENTAL BALLS—THE BASTINADO—THE PYRAMIDS MADE EASY—SUNIUM—MARATHON—ÆGINA—THE PARTHENON—ATHENS—LORD ELGIN—A FALSE RUMOUR—RETURN HOME.

It seemed fated that Sir Stafford's voyages were to be made comparatively late in life. Before his Canadian expedition he sailed the seas of Greece in Sir George Stucley's yacht, the Deerhound. They visited the Suez Canal at the moment of its opening; they beheld the last hours of French gaiety and glory, before the horrors of the year of dread. They saw the letting out of those waters of strife, the rush of the Mediterranean into the Red Sea. *Ἀρχὴ κακῶν*, beginning of evils, we may say, for the East and the West blended

their currents irreconcilable, and the war of their ideals and interests, of French and English interests also, began in that year. It is perhaps more easy to moralise the theme now than it was then. At least the diarist moralised very little. But it seems well to present a few pages from his diary: part of his picture of Gibraltar, of Egypt, of the splendid ruinous ceremonial; and to add certain notes of the brief tour in Greece. At last he saw the old centre of the world's life, the ruined and fireless altar of art, of politics, of democracy. With this preface, his words may speak for themselves, telling their own story of interesting impressions in his own fresh and unaffected manner:—

There is something very strange in this yacht life. One feels so cut off from all one's ordinary life, and from all home interests. Beyond occasionally thinking how all are at Pynes, I never turn my mind to anything in England; and yet one does nothing, and almost thinks of nothing, instead of one's usual avocations. The days are short, and one spends them chiefly on deck, reading a little in a desultory way, and looking at the sea and the sky. When it becomes dark it is hard to read by the dim swinging lamp, which confuses one's sight, and is bad for the eyes; so we play whist a little and chess a little, and stay on deck and look at the stars and the coast lights a good deal. It is a time which ought to be excellent for thinking in, and yet it is curious how little I seem to think. I suspect

the ladies are right in saying that a man can do without thinking at all, which they maintain that the female sex cannot. I find myself often in the condition of the jolly young waterman, who "rowed along thinking of nothing at all."

As we rode out, and looked back on the Rock, it seemed as if it were full of sand-martins' holes, the sand-martins being, however, neither more nor less than artillery. What a sight a general discharge from the whole face of the Rock would be! Just within our lines we saw the spot where a new and apparently inexhaustible supply of fresh water has been discovered within the last three months, a most seasonable discovery in this singularly arid year. There has been no rain here, except one shower on Monday week, since February. The water is being forced up from the new source to the Moorish tower, high above the town, which can thus be readily supplied. The only drawback is, that it is supposed that the water is too near the cemetery; and there are some searchings of heart as to its salubrity. The road over what is called the neutral ground reads us a lesson as to the relations between Spain and England. Our people were anxious to make it, but to this Spanish pride would not consent. "They would make it," only they didn't. At last the new provisional Government, which is paying much attention to this neighbourhood, and has allowed houses to be built and improvements made near the Spanish lines, contrary to the traditional policy of their predecessors, took up the

road question and sent an engineer to make it. The engineer came, saw, but did not conquer the difficulty. He was in want of implements. Would we lend him some? "Certainly," said the Governor, and the implements were lent. The next thing was the material. Could we let them have any stone? "That wasn't in the bargain," said the Governor; "but you shall have the stone." Then came the portage of the stone. Would we be good enough to haul it for them? We did, and then the Spaniards made the road. Captain Monsell told me that the Governor of Algesiras calls himself also "Governor of Gibraltar, now in the temporary possession of the English." Our occupation must be galling to the Spanish nation; but it seems to be popular with the Spaniards in the neighbourhood, who thrive upon us. We saw some women in the neutral ground filling their stockings with snuff and tobacco, which they had bought duty-free in Gibraltar, and were trying thus to smuggle into Spain! The cork-woods are about eleven miles from Gibraltar. We went by way of the Roque, ascending a pretty good hill and coming down upon the pine-woods first and the cork-woods below them, looking very forest-like and glady, and set in a magnificent framework of distant mountains. From some points you looked round at Abyla, the Algesiras hills, and so on, till they connected themselves with the fine chain of the Ronda mountains to the north. We admired the primitive character of the agriculture, and the construction of the ox-ploughs, which seemed very Virgilian. Numbers of cows

and some sheep were wandering about the fields pretending to graze, but they were grazing without grass. Our party, which had scattered a little, drew together before we entered the cork-woods, and a propitiatory sacrifice was offered to the nymphs by Jenkinson's horse, which lay down in the brook we had to cross, and compelled his rider to a hasty, but not inartistic, dismount. We reached at last a grand old cork-tree in the midst of the forest, fit for Robin Hood's trysting-tree. Here we dismounted, and disposed of our horses in various ways. Some were tied up to trees with their saddles on, and some with their saddles off; others were consigned to the charge of a Murillo-like boy who had run with us from San Roque. The best contribution to our picnic was furnished by Mr Fitz-George, who produced a pot of *pâté de foie gras*, and, like the little maid in the Devonshire ring, bottles of wine he brought us too. When we had paid a proper amount of respect to the feast, we bethought ourselves of trying the effect of the *pâté* on our Murillo boy, who ate and gazed alternately, as if, like Charles Lamb's first crackling-eater, he was trying to make out where the good taste came from. Our good action was rewarded by the arrival of a picturesque individual carrying a huge water-melon on his head and others under his arm. The fat boy in vain endeavoured to turn his own head to the same account. A large water-melon, however, was purchased at the (Mrs Farnall assured us) exorbitant price of 9d., and was soon cut up into great hunches, of which we partook as best we might; the fat boy distin-

guishing himself. We gave a good slice to our Murillo boy, and the remnants to the horses. Meanwhile the fat boy's pony, a very spicy chestnut, began to enliven us by various plunges and other gambols, culminating in a somersault of a remarkable description. Ultimately we remounted, and returned by way of the plain, over a sort of common studded with aloes and palmetto-bushes, the fat boy and chestnut pony disporting themselves like land-porpoises. The soberer portion of the cavalcade, consisting of Madame, Sir George, Captain Monsell, and myself, presently came up to the rest at a roadside *venta* called the Sportsmen's Arms, imbibing pale ale and lemonade. Having rallied our forces, we came home by way of the beach, where we had the good luck to fall in with a party of thirty or forty men, women, and boys drawing in a great *seine*. The sight was highly picturesque, and the take of fish good. Here the chestnut pony took the opportunity of performing some pirouettes, with his hind-feet in the sea and his fore-feet in the air. The fat boy's feet were anywhere but in the stirrups; but he kept his seat gallantly, and was soon afterwards seen ransoming an unlucky sea-bird which a Spanish pirate was carrying about by the wings. Threepence ransom was demanded and paid, and the bird released; but the moment it was let go it was recaptured, and had to be ransomed over again with another threepence. This time it was thrown well into the sea. Its former captor jumped in immediately and swam after it; but the bird swam the better of the two, and got off. And so ends our day in the cork-woods.

I went out on deck, and compared the great waves to the Devonshire fences and the Deerhound to Nimrod. She cleared them for some time quite in the old horse's style; but as matters grew worse, we came in for frequent croppers, and the vessel went plunging down into the trough of the sea in a manner which uncomfortably recalled the sensation of going over one's horse's head into the next field. At last I heard a despairing shriek from the man at the wheel. "Will some one pass the word for the mate of the watch?" "Do you want to send him a message?" says I. "Yes, sir," says he; "here's a sea come up and washed away the gratings over the screw and all the meat with them, and very nearly washed away me too." The consternation of the guests of Nasidienus, when the hangings fell upon the dinner-table, was as nothing compared to that with which this announcement struck our unlucky party. All the fresh meat gone—for the hares and pheasants, though euphemistically described by the cook as "not too high," were certainly no longer too fresh. Salt-meat till we get to Malta, and at this rate how long shall we be getting there? Luckily we had laid in a stock of oranges at Gibraltar which, though too acid to eat, will make capital orangeade. The sea continuing rough, I got into the dingy, which had been pulled up on deck, and enjoyed myself greatly for some time; till at last some big waves, coming up where the larder was not, set the dingy itself afloat, and I thought it time to effect a retreat, which I did by stepping out into water half-way up to my knees, and I then went below and to bed.

Shortly afterwards the captain was startled by seeing a large mass of yellow swept along the deck, which turned out to be one of the sailors in his oilskin dress, who had been carried off his feet, and was swimming, or rather being swum, on his back. It is needless to add that a good deal more water found its way into the saloon than was at all good either for the carpet or the stove. Happily none came into our berths, and we all passed a good night. On this day was founded the Order of the Deerhound, of which Madame is Lady Paramount, and for which she is to make a rosette of the colours of the ship's number—yellow, red, white, and blue, with the motto Q.B.H.J., which may be taken to stand for *Quam bene hic jactamur*. "How well we are tossed about here!"

Nov. 2.—A magnificent view of the Sierra Nevada in the morning, a day of tossing and slow progress, a turn to Cartagena in the afternoon, a flying-fish which came on deck, and the sight of Jenkinson in his tarpaulin swaddling-clothes, lashed to the mast like Ulysses at the Siren's rocks, are the most memorable features of this day's experiences.

Nov. 9.—I found myself at Valetta when I woke, and was able to form my first idea of it very favourably. The harbour is very fine, and the town extremely striking. We are lying at the entrance to the Dockyard Creek, at the head of which are the Admiralty offices, the dry docks, &c. Beyond us, on the other side of a headland, is the Mercantile Creek, and beyond that the Great Harbour. Behind us, between us and the open sea, are two smaller

creeks. All these are on the left hand of a person entering the harbour. On the right hand is the principal part of the town, with the Cathedral, Governor's Palace, and other buildings. The fortifications are all cut out of the solid rock, and look imposingly strong. The town is clean-looking and highly picturesque, and the harbour is alive with small craft, but is just now quite empty of large ships, our fleet having gone to Port Said. We were much struck by the contrast between this clean, prosperous, busy port, and the dirty, faded dinginess of Cartagena. Here we have living England, there dead Carthage and asphyxised Spain. I don't think any one who has seen Gibraltar and Malta can look with complacency on the ideas of our modern economists of the Goldwin Smith school. The first thing that struck me in the morning was the number and fine tone of the bells which were chiming in the town. The next thing was the number and pertinacity of the boatmen, who on one pretence or other were swarming round our yacht. A short experience of Valetta throws much light upon the natural history of bluebottles, which are obviously Maltese in a state of transmigration. They cluster round one both at sea and on shore, buzz incessantly, and settle on one point as fast as one drives them from another. The Governor said the island was capable in a very good year of producing grain enough for its own consumption. He told us we were popular in the country but not in the town, which he thought unreasonable, as the expenditure of our fleet and army amounts to not less than £700,000 a-year. One

cannot look at the crowded town, however, without thinking what intense misery a siege would bring upon them. It would be a very much more serious affair here than at Gibraltar. The Governor said the island was over-populated, and that there was not much emigration from it, though the people would go off to Africa or elsewhere to push their fortunes for a time, usually returning to Malta when anything went wrong with them.

Nov. 11 *to* 15.—A rough passage to Egypt. Whether the Mediterranean dislikes the *mésalliance* with the Red Sea, or whether the Sultan and the Pasha have been raising the wind too freely, the effect is that we have never had a dry deck; that we have had very often wet cabins; that each meal has been devoured with greater difficulty than the last; that we have only been reconciled to the labour of dressing by the extreme labour of keeping ourselves from being shot out of bed; that our mess has commonly been a very "close-reefed" one; that pouring out wine has commonly been attended with a libation, and sometimes with a prostration on the part of the pourer; that our books have been continually on the floor, and often in salt water; that the captain has had to be lashed to the rigging to make an observation; that we all look like people who have come 3000 miles for pleasure; and that we are all truly thankful to see the coast of Egypt, with its low sandhills and its clusters of palm-trees, which welcome sight presented itself to our eyes at half-past ten this morning (the 15th).

Nov. 16.—*Finis coronat opus*, after all, and now we have

reached Port Said—and just in the very nick of time—we have no more to say in the way of grumbling. The forest of masts which we soon began to see in the distance was a clear indication of our course, and by-and-by we perceived the long low line of the breakwater which forms one side of the harbour, and which consists of large blocks of hewn stone thrown loosely on one another. As we drew nearer we saw that most of the ships were "dressed," —that is, decorated with a profusion of flags, most of them bearing the French and the Turkish colours, as well as their national ones,—an example which we subsequently followed. French ships were greatly in the majority, but there were plenty of Austrian, Prussian, Italian, Swedish, Greek, Spanish, and other vessels, besides of course many Turks. Seeing our English squadron lying rather outside the harbour, we made first towards it, and Sir G. and I got into our boat and went on board the Admiral's ship (the Lord Warden); but found that Sir A. Milne had just gone on shore to learn the arrangements, about which the officers could tell us nothing, having only arrived last night. They said the French Empress had just come, and that the dressing of the ships and the saluting was in her honour. We returned to the yacht, and felt our way into the harbour, soundings being from 5 to 3 fathoms, in which depth we anchored. The health boat soon came alongside, and while our papers were being got ready, the officer told us that the ceremonies were to begin at three o'clock with the "bénédiction des eaux." We got some lunch, and got into our boat about one, and made our way

to the Viceroy's yacht, where I sent up my name and Sir George's to Nubar Pasha. We went on board, and Nubar was very polite, and apologised for the hasty reception the Viceroy must give us, as he had to dress for a visit before the ceremony. The Viceroy came up and shook hands with us very graciously, and led us into his state cabin, where he seated himself and placed us by him. He thanked us for taking the trouble to come, and we of course said something complimentary about the Canal. He told us Mr Elliott had arrived; but that he had seen nothing of Lord Dudley, whom he expected. After a few minutes he got up, and we followed him out of the cabin and took our leave. Nubar Pasha told us about the arrangements for to-morrow. We then left the ship, and almost immediately fell in with the Empress Eugenie's boat, in which she was being towed about the harbour by a small steam-launch. It was very pretty to see all the ships manning their yards as she passed among them, and to hear the cheering and saluting and the "Partant pour la Syrie." In fact, the whole scene was gay and cheerful far beyond our conceptions. We made our way to the place where the benediction was to take place, and landed at the end of a long lane of soldiers. Not being in uniform, and not having much brass, we were at first ordered behind the lines; but afterwards perceiving that many people in plain clothes got better places, we appealed to an officer, and by giving my card and using Nubar Pasha's name, we got in front and into an excellent position. The various personages who were to take part in the ceremony passed close

to where we were standing, and we were able to speak to Colonel Stanton, Sir A. Milne, and some others of the English party, including the omnipresent Lord Houghton. The crowd was a very well-behaved one, and there was no pushing. A few specimens of the common British snob were to be discovered by a careful observer, and it was remarked that a female of the species was particularly edified by hearing the Empress blow her nose,—a touch of nature which obviously made the two ladies kin. The Emperor of Austria, Queen of Holland, &c., passed by, and a good many *diplomates;* also a band of Moslem priests, and another of Greek or Coptic ecclesiastics. Dr Russell of course was among the procession, with as many orders on his breast as there are advertisements in the second column of the 'Times.' As we were not near enough to see much of the ceremony itself, we made our way into the town, and walked about its great sandy streets, picking up shells as we went. Fancy picking up shells in Regent Street or the Rue de Rivoli! The place has a great deal of the French element in it. We were struck by the extreme indifference of the Arabs to all the gay doings on the port side: they were sitting lazily in the back streets, looking as if they thought the procession might come to them if it liked, but they wouldn't go to the procession. By the way, did Mohammed intend his famous mountain saying as a moral lesson to his followers? Very likely. They seem lazy enough to need it, but there is a quiet dignity about them which seems to affect all around. Even the French here are civil.

We returned to dinner, and drank the Viceroy's health in a bottle of champagne, and then went out to enjoy the illuminations. Our position near the entrance of the port gave us an excellent view of the general effect of the lighting up, and most striking it was. Most of the ships hoisted strings of coloured lamps, and many of them carried their lights along every line of their hull, masts, and rigging. The Viceroy's magnificent yacht and the Mohammed Ali man-of-war looked as if their outline had been drawn with a fiery pencil against the dark background of the evening sky. The oil-lamps were here and there diversified by the brilliant magnesian light, and the whole scene was enlivened by flights of rockets and Roman candles, now from one quarter, now from another. We got into the boat and rowed among the ships, admiring something fresh at every turn. There were some good *feux d'artifice* on the shore beyond the Viceroy's yacht, and near to the two great obelisks which stand like Jachin and Boaz at the mouth of the Canal, and the long low ridge of the breakwater was lit up with a grand row of bonfires. The effect of all this golden light below was to make the moon look more silvery than ever. One could not help thinking of all that she has witnessed in this marvellous land, and wondering whether the present great work was to be a χρῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ,[1] or is destined to pass away like its predecessor Pharaoh-Necho's canal. Of the seven wonders of the Old World, the Pyramids are the only remaining one, and now Egypt may boast the pos-

[1] An everlasting possession.

session at once of the oldest and of the newest of the great works of man. Soon after we had returned to our ship we were visited by an officer of the port, who took our name and the draught of the vessel, and told us he would come in the morning and give us our *billet de départ* and our instructions.

Nov. 17.—Precisely as the sun rose we heard a salute of twenty-one guns, which we presumed to signify the starting of the Viceroy's vessel. It was to be followed by those of the Empress, the Emperor of Austria, the Crown Prince of Prussia, and so on. Our friend of last night came and told us we were to have the eighteenth place, and were to follow the Dido, an English vessel carrying a number of passengers, which came in just before us yesterday. Sir George was indignant at being told to follow a merchant-vessel, and we went on shore to remonstrate; but the captain of the port could give us no redress, saying that the arrangements had been made by M. Lesseps, and that we might make our complaint to him at Ismailia. We found that sixty-four vessels expected to go through the Canal, so we had reason to be well pleased with our place, which we afterwards found was ahead of most of the other yachts and of many of the ships of war. At about eleven we were told to be ready to start; but it was twelve o'clock before we were fairly within the Canal, and for some time our progress was exceedingly slow, owing to the stoppages ahead. Each vessel was ordered to keep three cables' lengths (600 yards) behind its precursor, and it was desirable to keep

at a greater distance from the smoky funnel of the Dido. The ship behind us was a French man-of-war. After a time we made better progress; still, however, coming to occasional halts, as for instance is the case at the moment I am writing (5 P.M.), when there seems to be a regular block in the line. The Canal is truly wonderful. The first portion of it runs along the bank of the great Lake Menzaleh, from which it is separated by a low bank of sand which has been thrown up, and which looks as if a gale would blow it all away. It is a sort of "sandy ridge," which might be set off against the pebbly ridge at Northam. The lake was at one part literally alive with sea-fowl, and must have a large quantity of fish to attract so many. We saw an ibis (at least some of us did), and afterwards (all of us) the dead body of another. After leaving Lake Menzaleh, the Canal soon comes to a great expanse of real desert, and the first effect of a desert view is really striking. Sand and sandhills as far as the eye can reach, and, the imagination adds, a great deal further, give one more of the idea of being cut off from the world beyond than does an equal expanse of blue sea. The day has been delicious in point of temperature, though for an hour or two the sun was rather too hot. We sat on the top of the deck-house most of the day, and enjoyed our existence. Towards six o'clock our friend the Dido begins to show signs of uneasiness; we stop; presently he begins to go astern, and calls out to us that a vessel of war is aground in front of us. We back a little, on which up comes our French friend from

behind, nearly running us down, and showing great unwillingness to accept the situation. For some time we are in a ticklish position, sometimes drifting on to the bank, sometimes backing into the Frenchman, sometimes running up towards the Dido, sometimes anchoring. At last one of the little pony screw steam-launches which run about everywhere, puffing and fussing as if they were Pluto's policemen, came by with the welcome news, "On peut passer." In due time we saw the Dido go by two large ships which were aground on the right-hand bank, and with due care we followed, and having cleared them went down to dinner, leaving the captain in charge on deck. Presently we heard a palaver, which proved to be an application from some of the Dido's passengers who had been disporting themselves in her boat during the stoppage and had been left behind by their own vessel, that we would take them in tow; but the captain declined, as we had quite enough to do with looking after ourselves. After dinner we went up again, and found we were nearing Lake Timsah, on which stands Ismailia. The Canal is here very crooked, and much care was required in the steering. Meantime the sun had long set, and though we had a bright full moon, it was difficult to see the posts which marked the course, besides which, some of them had been carried away by our forerunners. Numerous rockets and Roman candles were going up at Ismailia, and we could perceive that the *fêtes* had begun; but a more personal interest was awakened in our minds by the sight of another large vessel aground in front of us

The Dido (which had a pilot on board) seemed to pass her easily, and we thought we should do the same, and ran on abreast of her, noticing that she was the Vulcan, a vessel of the Austrian Lloyd's. Just as we thought ourselves safely by, we felt our keel touch the bottom, and in another moment we were "stuck in the mud." The crew of the Vulcan set up a chuckle such as we may imagine the celestial godfather of their vessel would have indulged in if he had seen Mars stumble and break his leg; but they chuckled a little too soon. "Helm amidships! Back her hard! Stop her! Go ahead hard! Helm hard a-port—stand ready to go hard a-starboard! Drop the boat! Go full speed!" Our boat is lowered just in time to prevent its catching the Vulcan's port side, and our foremast touches the extremity of the Vulcan's yards. We go by so close that we could have shaken hands with her captain, but he probably was in no mood for such friendly demonstrations. We pass two more large vessels immediately ahead of the Vulcan, but these very easily, and in another minute we are in Lake Timsah. To find one's self suddenly in a great lake of which one had never heard, except in connection with the works of this Canal, and to see a grand expanse of water with a brilliantly illuminated city extending along a long line of its coast, some fifteen illuminated ships lying in front, a blaze of fireworks along the shore and among the ships, and then our own path through the water marked out for us by two rows of fire-buoys, had the most magical effect, and we could scarcely speak to one another for

some time. Everything seemed to have been admirably arranged, and if only the captain had had more time to study the charts which had been given us as we started, or if we had had a pilot on board, we should have dropped into our place as easily as possible; but the steering during the day had occupied his whole time and attention, and the chart by which he was working was misleading without the others, and we steered for the wrong red light, supposing ourselves to be going to our berth, but in truth running straight for the sandbanky shore. Lake Timsah is shallow; the Canal has been cut through it, and two or three *gares* have been hollowed out, where vessels may lie, but if you get out of the track of the Canal and are not in one of the *gares*, you are on the sandbanks. And such was our fate. We found ourselves in rapidly shoaling water, and close on shore, before we knew where we were. While we were perplexing ourselves over our situation, and trying to look at the chart and the fireworks both at once, one of the little steam-launches hailed us. "Quel numéro, messieurs?" "Numéro dix-huit." "Vous êtes très mal-placés; vous allez échouer; comment est-ce que vous trouvez là?" "Je ne sais pas," was all we could answer. "Eh, bien, suivez-moi," and off he set at some ten miles an hour. Now it is all very well for a little gentleman on the right side of a sandbank to say to a stout gentleman on the wrong side, "Suivez-moi," and to go off at railroad pace; but it is quite another thing for the gentlemen on the wrong side to follow the advice,

and we had some half-hour more of trouble and soundings to go through before we got into deep water, by which time our friend had come back, and at length conducted us safely to our moorings, to which we made ourselves fast about ten o'clock, and rejoiced in our good fortune. If we were eighteenth in starting, we must have been the thirteenth to enter the lake, for we had passed five vessels.

Nov. 18.—Ismailia by daylight is not Ismailia as we saw it illuminated last night; but it is wonderful enough. A few years ago there was nothing here but a swamp, which in summer was nearly dried up, and which was honoured with the name of Lake Timsah on account of the number of crocodiles which frequented it. The cutting of the Canal has let the waters of the Mediterranean into it, and has converted it from a fresh-water swamp into a salt lake about two miles square. At the same time the officers of the Canal administration have found it a convenient spot for their own residence, as being half-way between Port Said and Suez; they therefore commenced building here in 1862, and brought a canal of fresh water from the Nile for the use of their settlement on the barren sand. This water they have used in one part of the town for irrigation, and have created a garden well filled with plants and flowers. A railway, too, has now been made, which connects the place with Cairo and Suez. The Khedive has built himself a *châlet*, and we hear that English residents at Suez come up to Ismailia in "the season" for the sake of society. The town has an odd mixture of Orientalism and

Gallicanism about it. There seem to be some tolerable shops, and some of the houses look as if they were pleasant to live in. No doubt, if the expectations of the Canal Company are realised, Ismailia will in time become an important place. At the present moment it is hard to disentangle the special preparations for these *fêtes* from the normal condition of the town. A great effort has been made, and large sums expended (thrown away, one might say) to dress up the place for a couple of nights' reception. A large building has been erected for a State ball, capable of accommodating 2000 or 3000 persons properly, and (as we have since found) of having 5000 crammed into it; and other like decorations have been provided. But the most striking feature of these arrangements is, the summoning of a host of Arab chiefs from Upper Egypt to come and encamp on the long sandy beach which divides the town from the lake, in order, as we were told, that they might "exercise hospitality" towards the guests of the Pasha, though we did not clearly make out the meaning of this phrase. The spectacle they present is by far the most interesting part of the sights which have been provided for us. Their encampment extends for more than a mile along the shore, running the whole length of the town, between the lake and the fresh-water canal, which latter is cut parallel to the lake; and there are numerous tents also on the town side of the canal. Some of them are, I believe, provided for the guests of the Viceroy, for whom accommodation cannot be otherwise found; others are refreshment tents, into which it seems that any one may

enter, call for what he likes, and accept it at the Viceroy's hands. We did not like to avail ourselves of this munificent hospitality, but there seemed to be a good many Franks who were enjoying it. Several of the Arabs made signs to us to enter their tents as we passed among them; but we were too shy, particularly as we had a lady in our party, and did not know whether she would be welcome. Moreover, we were puzzled about our shoes, observing that all the Arabs had deposited their slippers at the tent-doors, a process which would not have been very convenient to us, while at the same time we should not have liked to defile their handsome carpets with our sandy feet. It was a wonderful sight to see this great host of dwellers in the wilderness thus brought together under our eyes. Of course it is not the same thing as seeing them at home in the desert, but in many respects we got an idea of their tent-life. We saw plenty of camels, asses, and horses among the tents, some cows also, and a number of turkeys and other poultry. We noticed their mode of tethering the horses, their squatting round their tents, their manner of eating and of smoking, their prostrations, and other things of which we had been reading all our lives. Altogether the sight was worth coming all this way to see, if it had been the only thing to reward us.

We began the morning with a swim in the lake. Shortly before breakfast-time Lieutenant Hoare came over from the Admiral's vessel to ask if he could be of any use to us. He gave us such information as he possessed respecting the arrangements for the future *fêtes*, &c., and told us

the Empress was impatient of "these little oriental balls," and wanted to get on a donkey and ride in the desert. Her Imperial Majesty seems to be enjoying herself immensely, but is not allowed to go anywhere beyond the reach of the telegraph, and is expecting an early summons back to France. She says, "I cannot understand how your Queen has such a nice country as India, and never goes there; I should be always going there if it were mine." The way the Viceroy has been spending his (or his people's) money on these *fêtes* is marvellous. At Cairo he has laid out 5,000,000 francs in setting up an opera-house and a circus for them, and is paying £1000 a-week to the opera company, besides a heavy contribution to the circus. At Port Said he wanted a palace for the occasion, and gave orders for its immediate erection. "How long can you give us?" "Five days"—and it was done in the time. Truly we are in the country of Aladdin. It seems the Viceroy nearly stopped the whole of the procession after all. He was so anxious to be off in good time that he started at twelve o'clock on Tuesday night; but before he had gone very far his vessel ran aground, and the crew could not get her off. He was in great agitation, but at last took to his boat, went back to Port Said, collected about 300 men in the middle of the night ("Je faisais un peu capitaine moi-même," he said), and by force got the ship afloat about an hour before the Empress (who started at nine) came up. After our breakfast we went and called on the Admiral, and saw him and Lady Milne, Mr and Mrs Elliott, and Colonel Stanton. While we were on

board, Lord Dudley, Lord Houghton, Mr Vivian, and many other visitors made their appearance, and we had a pleasant chat over all our adventures and plans. A gentleman belonging to Reuter's Telegraph Company was on board, and we got him to telegraph our arrival to the English newspapers, and also to bespeak us rooms at the New Hotel at Cairo, where, however, it seems to be a great chance whether we shall get any. After leaving the Admiral's vessel we went on shore, and walked about the town and the Arab encampment for some hours. The *mélange* of Franks and Orientals was curious enough, and we saw some queer figures of our own countrymen, and of Frenchmen and Germans, careering about on donkeys and camels, and occasionally on horses, with Arabs keeping up with them at a long swinging run. There was something in the free carriage of the Arabs and their upright figures that reminded me of the Highlanders. They are certainly some of nature's gentlemen. The Empress passed us with a party, all riding on dromedaries. She looked as if she was enjoying herself exceedingly. Soon afterwards came a small sort of omnibus drawn by eight dromedaries, one leading, then two, then three, then two wheelers, each dromedary having a separate rider. We could not see who was in the vehicle. As we returned to our boat, we saw a body of troops marching along the main street—first a regiment of the Viceroy's Zouaves, looking very French, and then three squadrons of cavalry, two of them lancers, the third carrying carbines. The band which accompanied the latter played a tune which must have

been invented to make life such a burden as to inspire the most cowardly soldier to rush into the ranks of the enemy and die to get it out of his ears. The troops formed at the landing-place where our boat was lying, and received the Empress and the Emperor of Austria, who had apparently ridden to the other end of the lake and taken boat there. In the evening the Jenkinsons and I went to the ball, Sir George wisely staying on board. We wrapped up well, for it was cold in the boat. We went to the landing-place near the ball-room, and finding no carriage, we walked up the sandy road—a new experience in ball-going—for about a quarter of a mile. (Baron Beust, we heard, went up on a donkey!) The ball was a plain-dress one, and the invitations frightfully in excess of the accommodation. We liked it as well as one likes that sort of thing, and sympathised with the Empress's saying, "Oh, if they were oriental balls, I should like them well enough; but they are only bad imitations of European ones." It was like giving one gooseberry-wine by way of champagne, when it would have been easy to give excellent beer, and the beer would have been the better article. The only noticeable feature in the scene was a few sheikhs, who looked picturesque. Spencer Ponsonby was in the room, and of course highly contemptuous over the arrangements.

Nov. 19.—(In Cairo.) We came in for the sight of a master administering the stick to his servant. He had thrown the lad down on his back, taken his feet up between his own legs with his left hand, and was using the

stick at his ease with the right. The boy was howling, but did not seem seriously hurt, though we heard that the doctors report that many cases of badly injured feet come under their notice in the hospitals.

Nov. 23.—Went to the Pyramids. Charles Lamb says of Nahum Tate that he performed two great feats in reducing the Psalms of David and the "Lear" of Shakespeare to the level of the meanest capacity; and certainly one would think that his spirit was still active in the world, and had been turning his attention to Egypt and making the Pyramids easy. We "did them" much as a modern Etonian does his Greek play with a crib. We started at 8 o'clock; I had the same donkey as yesterday (Yankee Doodle, a great white ass with a pair of broken knees, and a good deal of experience). We observed nothing particular till we reached the Nile, when the scene of crossing in the ferry-boats accorded us unmixed satisfaction. The usual amount of noise in the streets of Cairo was as silence to the noise at the water-side. Hosts of donkeys were being pushed, pulled, beaten, shouted at, and eventually lifted into the boats, and they shoved off with loads that looked very unmanageable. We had a boat to ourselves, and our donkeys took their places in it like old stagers. We had a pretty strong breeze in our favour, and sailed across easily enough, wondering how we were to get back again. Soon after crossing we came into the fine new road which the Viceroy has had made to the Pyramids, and which is perfectly luxurious. It is as wide as the Edgeware Road, but not so hard, and must be charm-

ing for a horse's feet. Avenues of acacias are planted all along it, and when these have grown to the size of those which line the earlier part of the road, the approach will be in delicious shade the whole way. Avenues of acacias are inferior in dignity to avenues of sphinxes, but they make pleasanter travelling. As we came nearer our destination, we became more and more conscious of the swarms of Cockney visitors; and nothing but the consciousness that we were, after all, only Cockney visitors ourselves, enabled one to get over the feeling of disgust which the crowd awakened. It was like going to Hampstead Heath on an Easter Monday, and I could not help thinking of your mother's cottage in the Vale of Health, and of the tea-garden which has taken its place. However, there the Pyramids were, and a person of lively imagination might depeople the scene and place himself at their foot in solitude; at all events he might try. We were seized on in the usual way, and dragged up the great Pyramid by the Arabs. I could have got up a great deal better by myself, but it would have been contrary to all precedent, and might have led to an *émeute*. It took me twenty minutes to go up, including a good stoppage for breath and another for a wrangle between two Arabs. The view from the top was good, but one could not enjoy it much in such a crowd. The first thing my Bedouin did was to go down on his knees and offer to cut my name, which I indignantly forbade. He then proceeded to tender some coins (genuine antiques of course) at a suspiciously low

price, and finally urged me to come down again quickly, in hopes, no doubt, of getting hold of another victim. We descended, and the rest of our party followed the stream and went inside, but I was satisfied with the first sniff at the entrance, and not feeling very well, I went off and wandered a little way into the desert, where I contrived to lose sight of the mob and to get a pretty clear view of the Pyramids themselves. In themselves they fully came up to, and even surpassed, my expectations. We lunched on one of the lower ranges of stone, and enjoyed ourselves lazily for some time, then went and admired the Sphinx, which is in some respects more interesting than the Pyramids themselves.

Dec. 4.—A most delicious, bright, fresh morning. Our voyage through the Archipelago would have been thoroughly perfect if only Sir George and Madame had been well enough to enjoy it with us. We left Syra about 4 A.M. When I got up I found we were passing between Ceos (the birthplace of Simonides) and Cythnos, leaving Gyara (*aude aliquid brevibus Gyaris et carcere dignum*) on our right hand. The outlines of both islands were good, especially that of Ceos; but there was not a trace of human life to be seen on their bare sides. There is a town, and there are said to be a good many remains of ancient structures, in Ceos, but not on the side we saw. As we passed on, we began to make out Sunium (C. Colonna), and altered our course so as to run close under it and get a view of the beautiful ruined temple which

crowns the height. I looked up the passage in the Ajax':—

"γενοίμαν ἵν' ὑλᾶεν ἔπεστι πόντου
πρόβλημ' ἁλίκλυστον, ἄκραν
ὑπὸ πλάκα Σουνίου,
τὰς ἱερὰς ὅπως
προσείποιμεν Ἀθάνας." [1]

But we could see no wood to represent the ὑλᾶεν πρόβλημα. Byron's "Place me on Sunium's marbled steep" is more suggestive of the present state of the promontory, with its striking edifice, the detached fragments of marble scattered all around, and the marked air of solitude that prevails. Indeed, throughout this morning's sail nothing has struck us more than the total absence of all signs of human life on shore, and, with the exception of three or four little boats, on the sea too. As we approached Sunium, the southern end of Eubœa loomed large upon us, and we greatly admired its fine outline. Andros showed itself in the distance. At length, as we cleared the end of Macronissi (Helena) we for a few moments caught sight of Cape Marathon, far up the strait, but very distinct; and I ran over the charge of the Athenians, and the attempt of the Persians at the *coup de main* after their defeat, when the shield was held up to them, and they sailed round Cape Sunium to attack the city,

[1] Set me where the wooded sea-worn cape hangs o'er the deep beneath "the rocky brow" of Sunium, that there I might cry, Holy Athens, hail! —Soph., 'Ajax,' 1219.

but were outmarched by Miltiades; and I tried to people the vacant sea with the galleys and triremes, and wished I had Arthur Hobhouse here to go through it all with. Ægina was the next interesting object, and I could not help thinking that there was something in the cocked-up-nose look of its conical hill which must have been very aggravating to the Athenians, and made the "Eyesore of the Piræus" doubly trying. It reminded me a little of ——'s *nez-en-air*. But Ægina is an interesting island too; and the whole Gulf of Athens, as one enters it, is very beautiful, and one quite feels how it must have awakened the enthusiastic love of its ancient people, and how the Athenians might well look upon the whole of it (and not their town alone) as their home, and might feel themselves not at all expatriated when they deserted the Acropolis and betook themselves to their ships. The first view of the Acropolis itself is decidedly disappointing. I could not believe it was the Acropolis. In the first place, I had not taken into consideration the height of the mountains which surround it, and which give it the effect of a building in a plain. Pentelicus and Hymettus are as high as Snowdon, and Parnes is higher than either of them. Seeing the Acropolis, as we did, at a great distance, and at broadside, and not being able to distinguish the Parthenon from the fortifications, we could think of nothing but a great new house, or railway station, with an elevated centre (the Parthenon, as it proved), and two long wings. But as we came nearer, and got a more angular view and

could by degrees make out the pillars of the Parthenon and distinguish buildings from rock, we altered our opinion, and admired duly; and when we got the Parthenon against the sky-line, we admired greatly. Still it did not *exceed* my expectations. The sun was just setting ("behind Morea's hills") as we entered the Piræus, and we admired greatly the rich purple glow which it threw over Pentelicus and Hymettus. We must to-morrow make out the different features of the place more clearly than we did as we came in.

Dec. 5.—Jenkinson and I went on shore after breakfast, and took the train to Athens (trains go every hour, and take about fifteen minutes, fare, πρώτης θέσεως,[1] one drachma), found ourselves rather too early for church (but saw the Queen go into the Russian Church) so took a turn round the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Olympius, which are very fine. One of the pillars, which was thrown down by a hurricane some years ago and lies broken in fragments, gives one an opportunity of more closely examining the beautiful carving of the capitals, as well as of seeing the mode in which the separate blocks of marble were put together. We wished the little monk's sentry-box, put up by the Venetians, could be taken away. It is very ugly, and it looks as if it might come down some day and damage the columns in its fall. It would be no harm if the fortifications round the Acropolis were taken down also. On our way to the Stadium we crossed the

[1] First class.

Ilissus, which contains about as much water as the stream in the Burleycombe probably contains at this moment.

The walls which have been laid bare at the end of the Stadium show the contour very perfectly; but we could not decide whether they marked the course itself, or the place appropriated to the spectators. The space between them is too narrow for two chariots to pass one another, but it might have done for foot-races. It is said that one or two statues have been discovered. The King is making these excavations at his own expense, but can ill afford to spend much out of his £40,000 a-year. His late Royal and Imperial visitors must have drawn rather heavily on his purse. On our way to the Dionysia we looked again at the temple of Jupiter, and at Hadrian's arch, with its inscription on one side, *Αἴδ' εἰσ' Ἀθαναι, Θησεώς ἡ πρίν πόλις,*[1] and on the other, *Αἴδ' Ἀδριανου, κουχὶ Θησεώς, πόλις.*[2]

The Dionysia is extremely interesting. There is a great deal of good carving lying about. We looked at the inscriptions on the seats, all the principal of which appear to be appropriated to different priests, heralds, and Thesmothetœ. I doubted whether the inscriptions were as old as the seats. Some certainly were quite modern—*i.e.*, of the time of Trajan, whose name appeared on one in the second row; another bears the name of Marcus Aurelius.

Dec. 6.—We all went up to Athens, and went over the

[1] Lo, Athens now, but Theseus' city once.
[2] Lo, Hadrian's now, and Theseus' town no more.

Theseum, the Acropolis, and the Dionysia; then to lunch with Herbert at the Hotel de la Grande Brétagne, where I took a room for the night, as it would be inconvenient to go back to the Piræus after the Ambassador's dinner, and moreover, I propose to start early to-morrow for Pentelicus. Sir George and Jenkinson went to the Embassy to excuse themselves. We afterwards all went to Constantine's and purchased some excellent photographs. The rest of the party then went back to the railway station, while I walked round by the Temple of the Winds, and made my way to the hotel. The day has been bright, but cold, and the wind very strong. Madame's hat was blown right over the slope from the Parthenon, and it was by great good luck that she recovered it. Mine also was blown off; as it was tied I did not lose it, but I lost the vulture's feather I had brought from Gibraltar. We were much delighted with everything we saw to-day. Some of the sepulchral monuments collected in the Theseum are very beautiful and touching, especially (I thought) one which I supposed to represent a lady dying after her confinement, taking leave of all her family, and with the baby held up near her. The effigy of Aristocles, who brought the news of the victory at Marathon and fell dead in the Agora, is interesting, and has the appearance of being a good likeness. There was a little figure of Pan with which we were greatly charmed. And I lost my heart to an Œdipus and Antigone, which has been recently placed there. None of these sculptures, however, are at all to compare in point of beauty with the lovely frag-

ment of Phidias in the Temple of the Wingless Victory —the one from which the Yankee broke off the foot, a piece of vandalism only paralleled, I am sorry to say, by that of a young English midshipman, who some sixteen or eighteen years ago broke off the head of an Athene in (I think) the Erechtheum. He was detected, and the head was taken out of his berth, but it has not been replaced. I was greatly tempted to pick up one of the myriad fragments with which the ground was covered, and asked the guard's permission to take one, but he would not allow me to take what had been even touched by a chisel. I was allowed a little fragment of marble, which I must bestow on Arthur.[1] I took our guide to task for talking of Minerva and Jupiter in this classic city, and in this classicising age, and begged him to stick to Athene and Zeus, but he did not seem to think the public would appreciate his accuracy. The pronunciation of the modern Greek brings me to shame, and I have wholly failed to understand, or make myself understood by, the shopkeepers, though Angelo (the guide) and I got on very well in puzzling out inscriptions and so on together. The reaction towards classicism does not seem to have penetrated very low down in the social scale yet. We were horrified to find that the Government are actually re-erecting a hideous modern building, intended for a museum, on the Acropolis itself, close to the very Parthenon. Its instant demolition ought to be insisted on

[1] Fourth son of Sir Stafford. He is now a clergyman, and has always been fond of curiosities.

by united Europe, and war declared if it is not effected within a month. I was amused at seeing the clock erected by the marbled Lord Elgin, as some compensation to Athens for his robbery of the Parthenon. It stands near the Temple of the Winds, and is very conspicuous. Athens is far more interesting than I had expected. The remains are more numerous and beautiful; and the compactness of the place adds greatly to its charm. One cannot help saying to one's self, when one observes the smallness of the space covered by the Acropolis, the Pnyx, the Agora, and the other salient points which have shed a lustre over the history of the world, "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

Sir Stafford left the yacht party at Malta, Dec. 14, after a rough passage from Athens, and proceeded to Marseilles by P. & O. His diary says:—

"*Dec.* 20.—Left Hotel Windsor at 8. Crossed from Boulogne to Folkestone, and reached Charing Cross about 7.30, dined at the hotel, and then walked up to Mrs Hobhouse's, where I heard that I had been the talk of the town all day, the 'Daily News' and 'Morning Post' having voted that I was drowned. Assured her that I hadn't been dead at all, and went to give Harry and Henrietta Lushington the same comfort.

"Wrote to Pynes: The Duke's motto, 'I am here.'" At Mrs Hobhouse's, Sir Stafford, on presenting himself after the rumour of his death, was taken by the servant for a ghost!

"*Dec.* 21.—A thoroughly miserable London day. Doubt-

ful whether I should not have been as well off at the bottom of the Mediterranean. Called on Lady E. Stucley, and gave her all our news."

Sir Stafford had some correspondence with the editor of one of the papers afterwards, on the unintentional cruelty involved in putting in unascertained pieces of bad news.

He reached Pynes on December 22.

"Longæ finis chartæque viæque."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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